

THE CONFLUENCE OF INNOVATION AND REFERENCE: *THREE SONGS FOR
SOPRANO AND ORCHESTRA* (2002) BY OSVALDO GOLIJOV

BY

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PREFACE

The works of Argentinian composer Osvaldo Golijov have gained international acclaim and popularity, so much so that he can arguably be considered one of the most important composers of the last decade. To this date he has won two and been nominated for an additional two GRAMMY awards, has been a composer-in-residence with the Ravinia Festival (2002), Spoleto Festival USA (2002, 2011), and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (2007-2010), and was honored with becoming the first composer-in-residence at Lincoln Center's Mostly Mozart Festival. His works are especially popular among younger audiences.¹ In his works, Golijov fuses classical with popular traditions, and employs music from his own varied cultural background to achieve the maximum expressivity, emphasizing a nostalgic and emotional quality. Eclectic folk-music influences combine with emotional poetry to define and represent Golijov's style in his *Three Songs for Soprano and Orchestra* (2002). In this suite, Golijov effectively weaves polystylism with art-music references to create an emotionally palpable work that simultaneously evokes the tradition of Romantic lyricism and ushers in the future of vocal music. An analysis and performance of this suite will yield a greater comprehension of Golijov's vocabulary and style so that the performer and audience member will better understand these characteristics and how they contribute to the emotional and communicative qualities of art song.

Osvaldo Golijov was born in La Plata, Argentina in 1960. The son of Eastern-European Jewish immigrants (a pianist mother and a physician father), he studied composition with Gerardo Gandini in Argentina. He then went on to study with Mark

¹ Marc Gidal, " 'Latin American' Composers of Art Music and the United States: Cosmopolitans Navigating Multiculturalism and Universalism," *Latin American Music Review* 31, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2010): 54.

Kopytman at the Jerusalem Rubin Academy in Israel and also with composers Oliver Knussen at Tanglewood and George Crumb at the University of Pennsylvania, where he earned his PhD.² He currently lives outside of Boston and holds a professorship at College of Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Some of his earlier works, namely *Yiddishbuk* and *The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind*, trade on his Jewish identity. Golijov admits that he forged this identity as a combination of childhood memories with his grandfather, his experience living in Tel Aviv, research on klezmer music and Hebrew chant, and collaboration with other musicians. While this statement excuses him from claiming authenticity, it is noteworthy that his chosen topics and styles resonate with his multi-cultural background.³

The work that catapulted him to international fame, *La Pasión según San Marcos*, explores a multitude of traditions. An examination of *La Pasión según San Marcos* reveals this eclecticism, featuring an African Jesus, Afro-Latin traditional instruments and movement, flamenco, medieval liturgical drama, and Jewish Kaddish.⁴ The results of this collaborative effort “took audiences by storm and made the composer the Great White Hope for the survival of classical music.”⁵ Music critic Alex Ross wrote “*Pasión* drops like a bomb on the belief that classical music is an exclusively European art. It has a revolutionary air, as if musical history were starting over, with new, sensuous materials and in a new, affirmative tone.”⁶ It is significant that Ross also repeatedly commends artists such as Golijov alongside crossover artists such as the Icelandic singer-songwriter

² Ibid., 54.

³ Susan McClary, “More Pomo Than Thou: the status of cultural meanings in music,” *New Formations* 66 (Spring 2009): 32.

⁴ Gidal, “ ‘Latin American’ Composers of Art Music and the United States,” 54-55.

⁵ McClary, “More Pomo Than Thou,” 32.

⁶ Alex Ross, “Resurrection,” *New Yorker*, 15 March 2002.

Björk for transgressing outdated cultural boundaries.⁷ Golijov's overwhelming popularity among cultural elite and young audiences have drawn comparisons with minimalist composer Philip Glass. Jack Sullivan remarks: "Golijov is picking up where Philip Glass left off, drawing a new crowd and issuing a loud rejoinder to a culture that keeps issuing premature death warrants for classical music."⁸

Golijov so often incorporates popular, folk, and religious music that to some it may seem that art music acts as an afterthought injection to those forms. One genre that clings to its classical roots and tradition more than most is opera, and yet Golijov achieves remarkable success with his 2005 piece *Ainadamar*, despite its fusion of flamenco elements and musique-concrète-influenced computer derived effects.⁹ In this case, Golijov incorporates these elements into an operatic score that still embraces human emotion while challenging the Romantic narrative concept of storytelling. The elements of art and popular music work together to form a powerful musical drama that not only explores the life and relationship of Federico Garcia Lorca and his muse Margarita Xirgu but also addresses issues of artistic freedom and expression. Golijov attributes the success of *Ainadamar* to many factors (Peter Sellars' brilliant staging concepts, for one), but considers the melody that runs throughout the score to be the most important.¹⁰ An operatic composer acutely aware of tradition, Golijov makes the observation that today's audiences will go to a Verdi or Puccini opera "singing the melodies they know they are about to hear, but they rarely leave the theater singing new tunes. This is what they like:

⁷ Gidal, " 'Latin American' Composers of Art Music and the United States," 56.

⁸ Ibid., 54.

⁹ Arlo McKinnon, "Ainadamar's Architect," *Opera News* 70, (August 2005): 37.

¹⁰ Juan Antonio Llorente, "Mi casa son el cuarteto y la voz," Interview with Osvaldo Golijov, *Scherzo* 21 (April 2006): 62.

the melodic vein of the opera.”¹¹ Golijov’s gift for rich melody draws in many singers eager to explore his emotional and satisfying works.

Because most of *Ainadamar* takes place in Granada, it seems only natural for Golijov to incorporate elements of flamenco. His sincerity in the way he utilizes these elements manifests in the inclusion in the opera of an authentic flamenco singer, which sets him apart from other composers and their efforts. Golijov explains his fluency and ease of working with multicultural elements by quoting one of his biggest influences, Astor Piazzolla:

He’d [Piazzolla] say ‘throw some more mud on that phrase.’ But Copland is clean...He is still trying to do away with that dirt, that grit, so to speak. I think he translated everything, and I think that certain things are not subject to translation. I mean, let’s say a tune is pentatonic, or in some [unusual] kind of scale. It’s not about that, it’s about how the voice utters that tune. I mean, what happens to the throat when singing that tune—that’s more important than the note, than the pitches.¹²

Golijov’s choice for an authentic flamenco singer (Jesus Montoya) for the part of Ruiz Alonso in *Ainadamar*, as opposed to a traditionally operatic tenor, helps him achieve this “non-translated, gritty” depiction of the genre. Montoya’s performance displays the qualities of authentic flamenco, showcasing not only tone quality and timbre associated with the genre, but also rhythmic liberties and ornamentation. In this way, as a performer of Golijov’s music, it becomes helpful to familiarize one’s self with his multicultural influences to understand exact how pitches and rhythms may be articulated and manipulated.

¹¹ Llorente, “Mi casa son el cuarteto y la voz,” 62.

¹² Ibid., 38.

One of the most successful interpreters and an enthusiastic champion of Golijov's vocal works is classical soprano Dawn Upshaw, the first to portray Margarita Xirgu in *Ainadamar*. Golijov's collaborations with soprano Dawn Upshaw, the first classical voice with whom he has worked intimately, have resulted in significant contributions to the operatic, chamber, and art song repertoire.¹³ Golijov prefers to collaborate with singers who are "always attentive to the purity of the emotion."¹⁴ This preference speaks to the importance of emotion and weight of communication in his works. The song-cycle *Ayre*, composed for Upshaw and the ensemble The Andalucian Dogs, explores the confluence of religious traditions (Christian, Muslim, and Jewish) and their coexistence before the expulsion of the Jews in 15th century Spain.¹⁵ Golijov mixes popular idioms, such as electronics and minimalism, with modal melodies and traditional klezmer elements in this cycle, and offers Upshaw the opportunity to showcase vocal virtuosity by allowing her to shift between bel canto technique, traditional Mediterranean folk and popular style, and extended techniques utilized in modern pieces. The exploration of identity and faith defines the narrative of this song cycle, and it becomes a familiar theme in Golijov's works. By embracing diversity and rejecting the homogenizing idea of a "melting-pot," Golijov bridges classical and popular music. Miller writes: "Golijov is set on a similar course, popular without being naïve, simple without lacking subtlety, above all exciting and entertaining, exploring issues of multi-layered identities within a wide, multi-cultural musical arena."¹⁶

¹³ Llorente, "Mi casa son el cuarteto y la voz," 61.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Malcom Miller, Review: *Ayre*, *Tempo* 60 (no. 237, July 2006), 80.

¹⁶ Ibid., 81.

While he has received the most recognition for his large-scale works, such as the inter-disciplinary *La Pasión según San Marcos* and the opera *Ainadamar*, Golijov's preferred medium of composition is chamber music. He acknowledges that he feels most at home writing for the quartet and the voice.¹⁷ His early collaborations with the Kronos Quartet in the late 1990's were decisive in launching his international career.¹⁸ The *Three Songs* were initially composed for a soprano with a chamber formation, a string quartet alone or a string quartet with clarinet.¹⁹ They were not necessarily composed as a suite, but the composer decided to present them as a collection as he recast them for soprano and orchestra upon a request by the Minnesota Symphony.²⁰ *Three Songs for Soprano and Orchestra* contains clear examples that overtly display how Golijov uses a multicultural vocabulary in one song collection. While each song is in a different language, with text by a different poet, they are sewn together by the common thread of nostalgia, which runs through the text and music of all three individual songs. At the same time, recast as a suite, *Three Songs for Soprano and Orchestra* contains clear examples that overtly display how Golijov uses a multicultural vocabulary. In this new format, the songs were recorded by Dawn Upshaw and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra under Robert Spano.

Golijov grew up listening to classical chamber music, Jewish liturgical and klezmer music, and the "new tango of Astor Piazzolla."²¹ Astor Piazzolla is most known

¹⁷ Juan Antonio Llorente, "Mi casa son el cuarteto y la voz," Interview with Osvaldo Golijov, *Scherzo* 21 (April 2006):61.

¹⁸ Marc Gidal, "'Latin American' Composers of Art Music and the United States: "54.

¹⁹ Osvaldo Golijov. Accessed July 31, 2011, available from <http://osvaldogolijov.com/wd6.htm>

²⁰ "Night of the Flying Horses" exists in a full orchestra and string orchestra version. "Lúa descolorida" is available for voice and piano; voice, piano, and treble instrument; and voice and string orchestra. "How Slow the Wind" exists in a full orchestra, string orchestra, and string quartet version.

²¹ Osvaldo Golijov. Accessed July 31, 2011, available from <http://osvaldogolijov.com/bio.htm>

for transforming traditional tango into “new tango.”²² Piazzolla and Golijov share a common compositional trait, in that they both have taken folk and popular genres and made them appropriate for the concert hall. Piazzolla explicitly remarked, however, that he and his Octeto Buenos Aires did not pretend or want to be considered “art music;” they merely sought to renew the tango. Notably, he explains “it would still be tango, and it would be, at the same time and more than anything, music.”²³ The lack of distinction between art and popular music influences Golijov to easily transverse both worlds. When questioned about popular influences, he describes his music as reflecting who he is, and that there are no intellectual decisions. While he asserts that perhaps other composers have ideological agendas, that label does not apply to him, stating “there are no differences between popular and classical, between the old and the new, because I understand how they all coexist.”²⁴

Piazzolla felt the need to transform the tango genre and elevate it, stating

I felt that it was necessary to take the tango away from that monotony in which it had been wrapping itself, harmonic as well as melodic, rhythmic, and aesthetic. I had an irresistible desire to make it more elevated musically, and thought that it would be also a way to feature the performers’ virtuosism.²⁵

Piazzolla observed that the truest and most authentic tango vocal performances contained elements of rubato and syncopation, mimicking emotional qualities of anxiety and loss of control.²⁶ Carlos Gardel, arguably the most famous tango singer of all time, could not read music, and it was his lack of formal music education that allowed him to

²² Martin Kutnowski, “Instrumental Rubato and Phrase Structure in Astor Piazzolla’s Music,” *Latin American Music Review* 23, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2002): 106.

²³ Kutnowski, “Instrumental Rubato and Phrase Structure in Astor Piazzolla’s Music,” 106.

²⁴ Llorente, “Mi Casa Son El Cuarteto y la Voz,” 61.

²⁵ Kutnowski, “Instrumental Rubato and Phrase Structure in Astor Piazzolla’s Music,” 106.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 107-108.

improvise according to the weight and meaning of the text.²⁷ In this way, Piazzolla modeled his rhythmic innovations for the New Tango after these irregular syncopations from authentic vocal performances. When composing for voice and ensemble, Piazzolla maintained a more traditional approach with regards to phrase structure and rhythmic complexity, being subservient to the text; however, his compositions for instrumental ensemble break from tango tradition as he uses irregular phrase lengths and dislocated rhythms.²⁸ Golijov emulated this approach in his songwriting. When writing for voice, he aims to serve the poetry,²⁹ but often employs complex rhythms and phrase structures for instrumental ensembles.³⁰ In a sense, he preserves lyricism on the one hand while maintaining the option of complex textures and experimentation on the other.

Even though the music of Osvaldo Golijov contains elements that celebrate the differences of ethnic groups, he also evokes emotional contents shared among all humans. Because of this combination of multicultural and universal qualities, Golijov cannot be defined as a multicultural composer alone, but rather as a cosmopolitan one. Defining Golijov as cosmopolitan offers a clearer depiction of how he fits in the modern composer landscape; it balances the regionalist (Latin American) with the individualist (art-music composer). Because of his transnational mobility and his social status among the cultural elite and art-music circles, the label of cosmopolitan rather than multicultural

²⁷ Ibid., 107. In a similar case, flamenco singer Jesus Montoya's lack of formal music education affords his performance an emotional and passionate authenticity.

²⁸ Ibid., 109-112.

²⁹ Llorente, "Mi casa son el cuarteto y la voz," 63.

³⁰ An example of this can be seen in the contrast of the Lullaby, Doina, and Gallop of "Night of the Flying Horses." The Lullaby aims to serve the poetry and the natural cadence of the language, while the Doina's improvisatory form contains irregular rhythms and syncopations. The Gallop also has more irregular phrase structure and complex articulations; these latter two pieces are for instrumental ensemble only.

fits quite well.³¹ Though Golijov has a multicultural background, his choice to use these elements in his compositions reflects his own interest in musical eclecticism.³² He explains that he “modulates cultures like other composers modulate keys.”³³ He uses the associative power of certain genres to reflect specific emotions (uninhibited gestures of passion are expressed through flamenco, for example), but leaves the interpretation up to the listener as to the specific meanings of genre juxtapositions.³⁴

Occasionally Golijov comes under scrutiny from art-music critics, specifically for his use of popular and folk music material. Borrowing from folk and non-classical genres, be that melody, harmony, rhythm, or performance practice, is not a novel idea for classical or Latin American composers.³⁵ His technique of “collage and pastiche” has garnered comparisons to American composer Charles Ives, but it is the unique skill with which he juxtaposes these ethnic elements with modern art-music ideas that make him a true innovator.³⁶

Golijov hopes to preside over a change in the course of modern music. “I am kind of announcing a new era in music, an era in which boundaries will disappear.”³⁷ He cites that his “omnivorous” taste in music echoes that of highbrow American audiences and also resonates with multicultural ideas. When critics like to point out his exploitation of the Argentine and Jewish influences in his music, Golijov reasons that “identity, whether cultural, religious, or musical, is a very fluid concept,” citing globalization and a

³¹ Gidal, “‘Latin American’ Composers of Art Music and the United States,” 42.

³² *Ibid.*, 55-57.

³³ *Ibid.*, 55.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 56.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 57.

shrinking world with few places of complete isolation.³⁸ His choice to utilize multicultural elements has less to do with his biography (though his first-hand experience and exposure makes for an authentic interpretation) and more to do with his cosmopolitan embrace of eclecticism.³⁹

When questioned about the label he prefers, Golijov asserts that he is most comfortable with the classical music stamp, citing his background growing up with a classical pianist mother and a love of the classical [art-music] genre. He considers that defining term to be the most comprehensive.⁴⁰ Golijov understands that much of the art-music audience remains conservative, and some believe he is an innovator, while others may not agree. His use of popular voices in “classical” works like *La Pasión según San Marcos* may “horrrify” some of the “protectors of the tradition,” but he stands by his choices as innovative, and, more importantly, emotionally and communicatively based. “I believe that the open emotional quality of my work makes them [art-music audience] uncomfortable.”⁴¹ He composes what he likes, without giving thought to older or younger audience appeal.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Llorente, “Mi Casa Son El Cuarteto Y La Voz,” 61.

⁴¹ Ibid., 61.

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Chapter 1

Memory and Nostalgia as Central Motivators of Golijov's

Three Songs for Soprano and Orchestra

Golijov believes in the powerful quality of nostalgia and employs folk and popular music from varying traditions to achieve a communicative quality of emotion in his compositions. He states that the most beautiful music in the history of the world was inspired by nostalgia, and in his case, he has experienced it from so many sides.⁴² In response to the observation that much of his music reflects human suffering, Golijov cites his adolescence in Argentina during the Dirty War⁴³ and his witnessing violence during his time in Israel as causes for his understanding of life and tragedy. He goes on to explain that a young composer may need more tragic inspiration, offering the example of Picasso in his Blue Period, and then as an artist grows, he can create "deeper music with lighter subjects."⁴⁴

The concept of nostalgia in music remains a nebulous one to discuss and define. Typically the understanding of a musical culture that is not our own is most easily achieved if that music is perceived within a theatrical or narrative context. To understand the music alone devoid of its context and memory associations, one requires a command

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Mark J. Osiel, "Constructing Subversion in Argentina's Dirty War," *Representations* 75, no.1 (Summer 2001): 120. Between eleven and fifteen thousand people were murdered between 1976 and 1980 by members of Argentina's officer corps in an effort to control what they perceived to be political rebellion and guerilla movements. Most Argentinian officers refer to this as "the War against Subversion, while critics call it the "Dirty War."

⁴⁴ Arlo McKinnon, "*Ainadamar's* Architect," 38.

of the specific musical vocabulary, and even then, one may struggle to explain or define what occurs in the music.⁴⁵ In the case of recalling literature, a person may use the text of what was read to confirm the memory. By contrast, the listener who possesses the skill to do this with music is decidedly more rare. Leon Botstein describes this difficulty:

The significance of music as history may be not primarily in the text but rather in the transaction between performer and listener, even if we regard the performer as one category of listener. That transaction involves the ascription of meaning in listening that in turn depends on the function of musical memory in a given culture. The text itself may not be helpful all on its own.⁴⁶

Botstein goes on to discuss the notion of nostalgia and how it may be best understood through music. The word “nostalgia” comes from a combination of *nostos* (return home) and *algia* (longing).⁴⁷ Svetlana Boym asserts that “nostalgia is a longing for home that no longer exists, containing the sentiment of loss and displacement but also the romance with one’s own fantasy.”⁴⁸ The ideology of nostalgia in European thought and culture has been ongoing since at least the late eighteenth-century, and can be seen in visual art and literature, especially that which romanticizes a pre-industrialized world. Nostalgia as ideology grew more intense in the late nineteenth-century, and became a musical strategy utilized by some composers. For example, Max Bruch’s 1872 oratorio *Odysseus* consciously suggests Handel, Bach, Mendelssohn, and Schubert.⁴⁹ These references were intended to evoke a sense of shared cultural heritage among amateur

⁴⁵ Leon Botstein, “Memory and Nostalgia as Music-Historical Categories,” *Musical Quarterly* 84 (no. 4, Winter 2000): 531.

⁴⁶ Botstein, “Memory and Nostalgia,” 532.

⁴⁷ Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, (New York: Basic Books, 2001), xvi.

⁴⁸ Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, xvi.

⁴⁹ Botstein, “Memory and Nostalgia,” 533.

choral participants through musical memory.⁵⁰ Two composers with whom nostalgia and memory are often associated are Charles Ives and Gustav Mahler. Both of these composers manipulate the possibilities of nostalgia through overt musical quotation of materials close to the listener's experience.⁵¹ In Mahler, Golijov finds a kindred spirit; in the same way that Mahler injected Bohemian folk music into his symphonies, Golijov weaves tango and flamenco into his works. "I feel close to Mahler," Golijov says. "Wherever you drop the needle on his records, you understand the emotion. The world is overwhelming but you feel his journey. When I write pieces like *Ayre* or *The Passion*, I want the same thing. I want people to take that journey with me."⁵²

Botstein notes, however, that in the twentieth-century composers began to write music that evoked the sensibility of loss and longing for a past that a listener (or the composer) may not have experienced or known. Folk traditions reconstructed by Bartok underscore not necessarily memory of a lost experience, but rather the contrast with contemporary life. The use of these folk-influenced gestures also makes the music distinctive.⁵³ This technique's effectiveness depends on the associations recalled within a framework of the musical event. A listener's experience will be limited to his or her own memory.⁵⁴

Music is noted for its "capacity to generate an intensity in the unanticipated recollection."⁵⁵ Its links to memory assist in discovering how cultures approach time and the inevitability of death. Exploring composer intentions and documenting the

⁵⁰ Ibid., 533. The work itself was explicitly anti-Wagner, despite using Wagnerian gestures, in an attempt to form an alternative German cultural identity.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Kevin Berger, "Golijov's World," www.salon.com. Accessed 3 September 2013.

⁵³ Botstein, "Memory and Nostalgia," 534.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 535.

experience of the listener help in understanding the impact of music as a catalyst for memory. How music behaves in conjunction with memory and, more specifically, nostalgia, still remains a difficult concept, with much dependent on the ideas of narrative and the imagination of the listener. For example, Debussy compared music as favorable to painting for its ability to collect impressions and evoke detail of variations of color and light. He derisively noted that the anticipation of narrative (form, structure, procedures) made music “devoid of emotional impact.”⁵⁶ Debussy, in agreement with Wagner, believed that music should emancipate the listener from the monotony of everyday life. Debussy aspired to write music that evoked specific memories of place, light, and feelings of past experiences that were not linked to any presumed logic of the composition.⁵⁷

How music can “mean” something will vary from one listener to another, based on personal experience and previous exposure. Golijov’s classical background and cultural influences (both from birthright and acquired, as he himself would assert) create unique juxtapositions that will evoke different associations for listeners. Susan McClary refers to Golijov’s works as “elaborately referential and ostentatiously eclectic.”⁵⁸ Much of the communicative quality of his music relies upon cultural reference and association. A listener will find Golijov’s music pleasing and interesting based on its organization, but the educated music lover will be able to draw comparisons to other references and genres, citing art and folk music associations which evoke specific emotions.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 534-535.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ McClary, “More Pomo than Thou,” 34.

Golijov aspires to have three cultures living in passive resistance in his music, acknowledging that sometimes they live harmoniously, while other times they do not.⁵⁹ Golijov states that the Jewish, Arabic, and Christian cultures that intersect in Spain fascinate him, as they have fascinated Ravel, Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky, and Miles Davis.⁶⁰ Simultaneously, the convergence of Jewish and Spanish elements that coexist in the *Three Songs for Soprano and Orchestra* display Golijov's sensitivity and reverence to different cultures and define his compositional voice. An examination of each song in a lecture recital context, drawing upon musical examples as the primary elements for discussion, will yield a panorama of how these cultures coexist and how Golijov's choices affect their depiction. Each of these songs displays not only an ethnic cultural influence, but also the structural profile of the classical music genre. It is Golijov's fluency in both the art music and folk/ethnic/popular music genre that contributes to the popularity of his music and the efficacy of his communication with audiences. He always seeks to achieve maximum emotional expression and does this through a combination of reference and innovation, which he does not only with technology but also the juxtaposition of genres. As he feels most at home in the chamber music and vocal genre, these songs display Golijov at his most viscerally communicative and serve as examples of his effortless ability to work simultaneously in seemingly disparate musical worlds.

⁵⁹ Llorente, "Mi casa son el cuarteto y la voz," 63.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 62.

Chapter 2
“Night of the Flying Horses”: Memory and Modality

Mach tsu di eigelech
Un du vest koomen
Tsu yenem zissn land
Fun baley-khloymess

Close your eyes
And you shall go
To that sweet land
All dreamers know

Avoo milch oon honik
Flissn tomid
Un dayn mameh
Hit dir op.

Where milk and honey
Always flow
And mama
watches over you.

Farshpray dein fligelech
Faygele meins
Mein tochter sertseh
Mein klayn zingfaygele

Spread your wings
My Fegele
My darling girl
My singing bird

Hayb oyf dein ponim
Aroyf tsoom himmel
Ich vel dich onkookn
Vee doo fleegst.

Lift your face
Towards the sky
I will be watching
As you fly.

Gedenkshe (teirinke)
Az koomt der morgn
Vet zein der tatte
Ahaym gefloygn

Remember dear
When morning comes
Your mama’s here:
Fly home to me.

Dos land foon chloymess
Mooztoo aveklozn
Dein eign zisser haym
Vaystoo iz doh.

The land of dreams
Must let you go
Your own sweet home
Is here, you know.⁶¹

Golijov’s eclectic suite begins with “Night of the Flying Horses,” a piece in three distinct parts. The opening displays the most folk-like and overtly nostalgic affect of the song, partly because it belongs ostensibly in the lullaby genre. It also clearly displays Golijov’s klezmer influences and also serves as a reminder of his success not only in the concert music world but also in film. Bearing the simplest melody of all three songs,

⁶¹ Osvaldo Golijov, *Three Songs for Soprano and String Orchestra*, [S.I.] (Boosey and Hawkes, 2000/2002); soprano and string orchestra score. Text by Sally Potter. Yiddish by Barry Davis.

“The Night of Flying Horses” displays its complexity in its instrumental scoring, both in the sections that follow the lullaby, a doina⁶² and a gallop. Golijov describes the piece in his opening program notes, explaining that it

starts with a Yiddish lullaby that I composed for Sally Potter’s film *The Man Who Cried*, set to function well in counterpoint to another important music theme in the soundtrack: Bizet’s Aria “Je crois entendre encore” from *The Pearl Fishers*... The lullaby metamorphoses into a dense and dark doina (a slow, gypsy, rubato genre) featuring the lowest string of the violas. The piece ends in a fast gallop boasting a theme I stole from my friends of the wild gypsy band Taraf de Haidouks.⁶³

Golijov’s penchant for narrative and rhetoric makes him a natural fit for film composition. Though *The Man Who Cried* is cited as the first of his film scores, he has since composed for a short film directed by Alejandro González Iñárritu (*Darkness*/2002) and two feature films directed by Francis Ford Coppola (*Youth Without Youth*/2007 and *Tetro*/2009).⁶⁴ Music factors heavily into the plot of the 2000 Sally Potter film *The Man Who Cried*. Opening in a Jewish village in 1927 Russia, the young Fegele Abramovich lives with her doting father, who sings her a wistful lullaby before he takes off for America in search of opportunity. Before he can send for her, Hitler’s army invades the village and little Fegele escapes to England, renamed Suzie upon her arrival.⁶⁵ Suzie acclimates to English society by losing her ethnic identity, exploiting her natural gifts as a singer to perform “Dido’s Lament” in school and then auditioning to become a chorus girl in Paris.

⁶² The doina is a plaintive and rhythmically free folksong style in the klezmer music genre.

⁶³ Osvaldo Golijov, *Three Songs for Soprano and String Orchestra*, [S.I.] (Boosey and Hawkes, 2000/2002); soprano and string orchestra score. Program notes.

⁶⁴ www.osvaldogolijov.com, accessed 25 August 2013.

⁶⁵ Deborah Young, “Film Review: *The Man Who Cried*,” *Variety* 380, September 18, 2000: 37.

As she performs in the chorus for a Parisian opera company, Suzie overhears the tenor singing “Je crois entendre encore,” a piece which bears strong resemblance to her beloved father’s lullaby. This stirs a passion within her to embrace her identity and find her father again. She also becomes enamored with a gypsy horse handler named César, also employed by the opera. In the company of the gypsy band, who accompany her “Dido’s Lament” on accordion and violin, Suzie finally feels at home.⁶⁶ The familiar tonality, instruments, and melodies of the gypsy band remind Suzie of her father and growing up in Russia, reinforcing the associative power of music and memory.

Suzie and César must part, however, when it becomes clear that the Nazis will invade Paris and conditions will be unfavorable for both Jews and gypsies. She flees to America and finally reunites with her father, who has become a film musical director in Hollywood. The final scene shows Fegele/Suzie at her father’s bedside, singing the same lullaby from her childhood; this scene poignantly recalls one of the first scenes from the film, where her father sits at her bedside and sings her the lullaby. Ending the film with the lullaby shows not only how Fegele’s journey has come full circle, but it also reinforces the importance of music and this particular lullaby to the film’s plot. Golijov’s music occasionally serves as a backdrop in the film, but the majority of the music plays as important a role as the characters themselves. Film critic Deborah Young writes “Osvaldo Golijov’s original score blends smoothly with a broad selection of popular opera tunes.”⁶⁷ The lullaby and “Je crois entendre encore” (performed in Italian by Salvatore Licitra) occur in alternation throughout the film, finally brought together with

⁶⁶ The gypsy band in the film is the same band mentioned by Golijov in the program notes, Taraf de Haidouks. Their lively music occurs mostly diegetically in many scenes throughout the film and serves to contrast the formal operatic performances.

⁶⁷ Young, “Film Review: *The Man Who Cried*,” 38.

the lullaby melody over the aria accompaniment at the film's final credits. This seamless juxtaposition layers both pieces effortlessly without ever seeming like an overt parody.

Themes of nostalgia and longing for home permeate the film, with music as the primary catalyst to motivate characters and spur the plot forward. Of all genres of song, the lullaby carries the strongest associations of nostalgia and memory. The relationship between parent and child combined with the near-sacred ritual of bedtime shared between these two create a clear image and warm response to a simple melody. Lullabies bear the label of most-beloved folk song, which can be defined here as "songs sung by a people expressing the characteristics of a people."⁶⁸ The genre of Yiddish folk song contains many lullabies, most sharing similar characteristics with other non-Yiddish lullabies: a calming melody and words with a soothing effect like "ay lyu lyu" or "hushaby."⁶⁹ Yiddish lullabies, however, contain the aspirations and hopes, fears and sometimes despair felt by the parents who would sing these songs to their children. Their melodies are almost always in a minor key, regardless of the message of the song, which always imparts a hint of melancholy.⁷⁰ Though Sally Potter wrote the words for the lullaby that runs throughout the film, the text resembles a traditional Yiddish lullaby.⁷¹ The sentiment reflects the dreams a parent has for a child, and offers reassurance to the child that home (and mother's love) will always embrace the child, despite encouragement to

⁶⁸ Eva Metzger, "The Lullaby in Yiddish Folk Song," *Jewish Social Studies* 46, no.3/4 (Autumn 1984): 253.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 253. "Yiddish" can be defined as the language spoken by the Jews of Eastern Europe and immigrants from those countries. The language descended from Middle Ages' German and combines with Hebrew and Aramaic, absorbing expressions from wherever Jews have lived, such as Slavic countries. It is often found in English transliteration in song books.

⁷⁰ Ibid. Most authors agree that the phenomenon of the minor key in most Yiddish folk songs can be accounted for through the long history of Jewish suffering in the diaspora.

⁷¹ Sally Potter wrote the text, but Barry Davis created the Yiddish version. In the film, the text is changed from "mameh" to "tateh" to reflect the relationship between father and daughter.

“spread your wings.”⁷² The name “feygele” (meaning birdie, or little bird) frequently occurs as a term of endearment in many Yiddish lullabies; it seems appropriate and fitting that the main character of the film would have this as her given name.⁷³ Many lullabies also illustrated the heartache caused by emigration when families separated. A father would often make his way to America first and send for the rest of the family in the homeland (often Russia, Poland, or the Ukraine) when there was enough money.⁷⁴ While this lullaby does not address the pain of separation due to emigration as directly as the film itself, the situation’s reflection in musical form is noteworthy.

Golijov crafts this lullaby to work in counterpoint with “Je crois entendre encore,” an aria from Georges Bizet’s *Les Pêcheurs des Perles*. The character Nadir sings this aria, recalling the voice and image of Leïla, his beloved. He describes her as a “delightful memory, mad intoxication, sweet dream, charming memory.”⁷⁵ Again, the elements of longing and nostalgia intertwine with memory that coincides not only with the lullaby but also with the other two songs in this set. To function well in counterpoint, these pieces share the same harmonic scheme (largely i-iv-V-i) with elements of Phrygian modality in the melody. These pieces also share a lilting 6/8 time signature; while the lullaby changes time signature to 2/4, the melody continues with triplets, keeping the 6/8 feel. Bizet’s choice of tonality for his aria (namely minor with forays into Phrygian mode) evokes a feeling of nostalgia and longing that makes a case for the implications and associations of modal harmony. Bizet’s association with the European practice of musical exoticism has long been discussed, especially in conjunction with his

⁷² Lullaby text. “Farshpray dein fliegelech/spread your wings.”

⁷³ Metzger, “The Lullaby in Yiddish Folk Song,” 256. In a lullaby examined by Metzger: “lulinke mayn fegele...”

⁷⁴ Ibid., 260.

⁷⁵ “..enchanteresse Divin ravissement, O souvenir charmant” - Translated by Neil Kurtzman.

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Spanish/Gypsy influenced masterpiece *Carmen*. Within this Eurocentric practice, Bizet was revolutionary in incorporating actual Spanish dances with more fidelity than most of his French, German, and Italian predecessors. This will permit true associations between his melody and Golijov's in the film. (Ex. 1 and 2)



Ex. 1- Melody from “Je crois entendre encore” mm. 12-22



Ex. 2- Melody from “Night of the Flying Horses” mm. 18-26

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In this instance, both Golijov and Bizet use tonality within their respective genres (film and opera) to make character distinctions. Ralph P. Locke describes how musical exoticism works in Western European Classical music:

How this operates will not surprise scholars who deal with opera or film music (or song). Since it is simply a special case of the more general ways that music functions in dramatic and other overtly representational and/or narrative genres. The words or visual elements in an opera, oratorio, or film place the character or group in a given elsewhere. Often the music marks the character or group

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indelibly as “barbarous” “seductive” “wise” of whatever. The audience melds the two indiscreet messages into an indissoluble whole.⁷⁶

The use of tonality and modality to make character associations, especially in narrative genres, is a practice that has existed for centuries and will most likely continue. In the case of Golijov, this compositional practice has evolved through a process of postmodern appropriation of actual popular music references, as opposed to mere suggestions by mediation through European classical styles. It cannot be termed musical exoticism any longer, as the intent is not to delineate an opposition between Europe and the rest of the world. Instead, the composer seeks to embrace and manifest identity with the Jewish experience. For example, in “The Night of the Flying Horses,” the minor mode lullaby creates a clear association for Suzie/Fegele with her family and her ethnic identity, well-known by Golijov. Still, the happy coincidence of styles between Bizet and Golijov allows for such a situation as Fegele hearing Bizet as a similar melody with a matching harmonic palate to her childhood lullaby, and she (and the audience) can associate it with her childhood memories. Golijov uses this combination to assist the narrative without ever overtly explaining any of these associations.

Golijov also employs instrumentation and modal harmony in the music of the gypsies to evoke associative powers between their music and the music of Suzie/Fegele’s past; she only has to hear their music to know that she belongs among them. That the audience will be able to draw associations between character groups due to similar musical ideas is an assumption that cannot be taken for granted; how specific tonalities

⁷⁶ Ralph P. Locke, “A Broader View of Musical Exoticism,” *The Journal of Musicology* 24 (no. 4 Fall 2007): 492.

get assigned to ethnic groups and can therefore acquire other associative meanings remains a more elusive and less concrete concept.

Golijov and the influence of flamenco and klezmer

Golijov easily travels the worlds of art and popular music, mainly through his ability to work with ethnic elements within more traditionally classical genres. One of the elements he most frequently utilizes is modal harmony. Much of the modal harmony that makes up Golijov's frequently employed vocabulary comes from Andalusian and Eastern European ethnic music; therefore, it will be beneficial to examine some of the characteristics of these musics and explore their similarities and cultural identifications.

Peter Manuel describes the distinctive musics of the Mediterranean as having a harmonic-melodic system that differs qualitatively from that of Western common practice tonality.⁷⁷ He goes on to describe "mode" as "a linear melodic construct based on scale type, with a tonic note, and in many but not all cases, more specific melodic features like pitch hierarchy and characteristic phrases."⁷⁸ Western art music and the music of the Mediterranean regions that employ modal harmony differ in principal methods of organization. While Western art music evolved from a melodic to a harmonic method of organization, many of these ethnic genres do not rely on chordal harmony to play such a structural role, but rather emphasize the modal character of the melodic line.⁷⁹ An oscillation between two chords may often be the only harmony that accompanies this music. Manuel writes "the confluence of Turko-Arab and Eastern European music with

⁷⁷ Peter Manuel, "Modal Harmony in Andalusian, Eastern European, and Turkish Syncretic Musics," *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 21, (1989): 70.

⁷⁸ Manuel, "Modal Harmony," 70.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 70-71.

Western music has generated syncretic hybrids over the centuries.”⁸⁰ The Phrygian tonality, so often employed by Golijov in many of his works, represents one of these syncretic hybrids. A product of the modal traditions of pre-Moorish Spain, Arab modal music, and Western common-practice tonality, this tonality reflects affinities with two modes: Bayati and Hijaz, spelled out as follows:⁸¹

Bayati: E F# G A B C D E D C B A G F# E

Hicaz: E F G# A B C# D E D C♭ B A G# F E

Often with this modality, the fourth (subdominant) functions as a secondary tonic. This can be seen in the lullaby and also “Je crois entendre encore.” (Ex.3 and 4)

⁸⁰ Ibid., 71.

⁸¹ Ibid., 72.

NADIR. *p*

Je crois entendre en co - re ca -
 The palm trees bowed to hide me, A

ché sous les palmiers Sa voix tendre et so -
 root of leaves a-bove I heard her voice be -

Ex. 3- "Je crois entendre encore"

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Phrygian modality is often marked in flamenco, an Andalusian folk genre that emerged in the nineteenth century among the settled gypsies of Seville and Cadiz. In this primarily vocal genre, the melodies are entirely modal and adhere closely to the Phrygian scale with occasional usage of raised or neutral third scale degree like Hicaz. The accompaniment, usually guitar, oscillates between tonic and flat supertonic with an occasional minor iv.⁸²

Gypsies were considered to be the most significant source of transmission for this modality. In Eastern Europe, as in Andalusia, gypsies tended to preserve and perpetuate the older musical practices; however, they often synthesized them with Western styles, creating a system of modal harmony that became known throughout the region. A unique musical identity became synonymous with gypsy musicians, as many of them were employed as slaves in the Ottoman Empire and expected to offer exotic and novel music as entertainment at court.⁸³ Their synthesis of court music with their own indigenous tradition played a vital role in the confluence of Western harmonic practice and non-Western modality.

Golijov's propensity to combine art and folk music can potentially be linked not only to the influence of Piazzolla and flamenco, but also to the transformative journey of klezmer music. Jewish secular musicians, referred to as klezmerim, in Eastern Europe functioned similarly to the gypsies in their dissemination of musical styles. Both of the groups overlapped and often interacted.⁸⁴ Klezmerim functioned as agents of musical homogeneity, as Jews made up an international community and Jewish musicians served

⁸² Ibid., 74.

⁸³ Ibid., 77.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 89.

as conduits to transmit genres across borders.⁸⁵ This fact reinforces the concept of the film: the associative power of music can travel from one ethnic group to another. This is encapsulated in the scene in the film where young Suzie, watching the gypsies traipse by her school, immediately starts singing the lullaby from her childhood. She associates the music of the gypsies and the tonalities and instruments they use with the music of her culture.

Klezmorim repertoire consists largely of regional genres, such as the polka, mazurka, quadrille, and instrumental versions of Romanian gypsy songs, and it varies little from region to region. A notable genre of the klezmerim is the doina, a free-rhythm song form. Often employing the raised fourth, especially when played by klezmer or gypsy musicians, the harmonies remain simple, similar to other gypsy ballads.⁸⁶

Klezmer stands out as an eclectic genre because audiences were conversant in many styles and traditions. In America, klezmer evolved through inter-ethnic sharing (Jews playing at non-Jewish events) and also embraced a wide variety of styles within the genre itself.⁸⁷ While this music has undergone change over the last century, klezmer's core concept, that of an identifying characteristic of "instrumental, 'good time music,' inextricably linked to dance" has and continues to remain a constant.⁸⁸ An ethnic group defines itself through its choices, arriving at a communal sense of identity through a mutually agreed upon version of "home" (all aspects of the culture acknowledged by the

⁸⁵ Ibid., 76-77.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 89.

⁸⁷ Mark Slobin, "Klezmer Music: An American Ethnic Genre," *Yearbook for Traditional Music* 16 (1984): 34.

⁸⁸ Slobin, "Klezmer Music," 35.

group).⁸⁹ Ethnic audiences could accept change within the instrumentation of klezmer as long as the specific genres of songs remained constant. The violin, or fiddle, one of the quintessential instruments of klezmer in Europe, was replaced by the clarinet in mid-twentieth century America, just as the tuba replaced the string bass. The accordion could replace the entire band if necessary.⁹⁰ Because of the film's setting in early twentieth-century Europe, Golijov chooses to keep the strings as a prominent force in the "Night of the Flying Horses," allowing the identifiable fiddle (or, in this case, viola) to be featured. Golijov utilizes his familiarity with klezmer to craft a powerfully authentic piece that stands on its own merit but becomes even more poignant in context of its film narrative.

Doina and Lullaby

As previously stated, the doina is a distinctive genre of klezmer music. Slobin cites this genre as the clearest case for symbolic identity, a "folksong style of striking sound, plaintive and in free-rhythm."⁹¹ These songs typically began in an unmetered, improvisatory-like style and were followed with a livelier, metered section. Although originally of Romanian peasant origin, Jewish-Americans self-identified with the genre, though reasons remain unclear as to why. Sheet music and discs of doinas were produced by Jewish New York publishers and enjoyed popularity in the early twentieth century.⁹² Aaron Lebedeff, a famous Jewish-American performer, produced many nostalgic songs about Romania in the 1920's. The theme of nostalgia grew as a topic for Jewish-American music during this time, due to the United States' closing mass immigration in 1924. Prior to this time, the impact of the wars in Eastern Europe shielded most recent

⁸⁹ Ibid., 35.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 39.

⁹¹ Ibid., 36.

⁹² Ibid., 37.

immigrants from viewing the Old World with such warm affection.⁹³ Nostalgia contributes to the meaning of the doina within the klezmer community; as a group searches for musical symbols to legitimize its identity, it is the meaning, not necessarily form, of a particular style that puts it inside the boundary of identifiable characteristics.⁹⁴ Because of its associations with nostalgic songs about the homeland, the doina carries with it more than just the sum of its parts. The emotional weight implied through remembrance imbues it with an implication it may or may not realize. Golijov's choice to follow the lullaby with a "dense and dark" doina speaks to the fixation on the theme of nostalgia in the piece. It works well as a backdrop to introspective and suspenseful scenes in the film, as well, illustrating emotion through the plaintive instrumental solos.

"The Night of Flying Horses" begins with an a cappella lullaby. The melody resembles a folk song, featuring a lilting rhythm that fits easily into the 6/8 time signature. Because the lullaby will be sung not only by the father in the story, but also by the young and adult Fegele, it is essential that the tune be easy to repeat, non-virtuosic, and natural. Golijov crafts an original lullaby tune modeled after so many of the beloved Yiddish lullabies. The first four measures introduce the tonality and establish the minor mode (g minor here). The C5 on "zissn" at m. 5 suggests the subdominant c minor, which follows the harmonic pattern of "Je crois entendre encore." The leading tone of F# in m. 6 provides a quick transition back to the tonic in mm. 7-8. The second half of the melody from mm. 9- 12 suggests the dominant D major, with a C# on "milch" in m. 8 and repeated F#'s in m. 9 and 11. The B flat in m. 12 and F natural in m. 14 suggest d minor, or, more likely, a modal harmony combination of the Bayati and Hicaz scales.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 38.

The text of this first verse articulates the basic message of any lullaby: “close your eyes and you shall go to that sweet land all dreamers know, where milk and honey always flow and mama watches over you.”⁹⁵ The rhythm lulls the child, while the small range of the melody (just over an octave, with a narrower tessitura of about a sixth) maintains a calming effect, as it does not tax the singer or the ears of the listener by traveling to a high area of the range. (Ex. 5)



Ex. 5- Melody of Lullaby in “Night of the Flying Horses” mm. 1-17

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 [REDACTED]

A brief orchestral interlude begins at m. 15, as the strings articulate pizzicato notes D and G and the time signature switches from 6/8 to 2/4. The second verse of this strophic lullaby begins at m. 20, accompanied by pizzicato strings and doubled melodically by flute and clarinet. Though the meter changes from 6/8 to 2/4, the triplets in the melody maintain the original melody.⁹⁶ The doubling of the melody with the solo

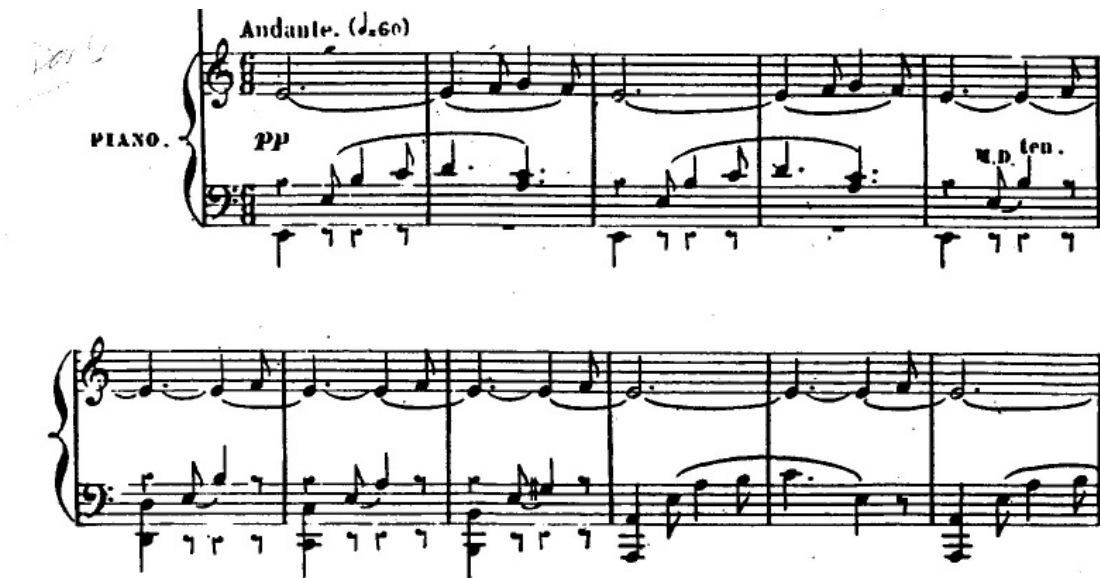


⁹⁵ Golijov, *Three Songs for Soprano and Orchestra*, program notes. In the film, “mameh” is appropriately changed to “tateh,” to reflect Fegele’s relationship with her father.

⁹⁶ At m. 22, the recording reflects a change in the rhythm for “Fegele mein,” as Upshaw sings a sustained C5 on the second half of the first beat and “-gele” on the second and third notes of a triplet in the second beat. This choice reflects the natural stress of the word.

winds, especially the flute and clarinet in octaves, defines the song-like quality of the lullaby. The pizzicato violins remain in the background, but the rhythmic two-against-three between the melody and accompaniment creates more interest than if the time signature had remained 6/8 with their articulations on the large pulses of the bar. Despite the addition of instruments, this second verse still asserts an intimate quality associated with the bedside lullaby.

The third verse, however, broadens almost immediately with the introduction of low strings, English horn, bass clarinet, bassoons, and horns. Golijov indicates “*poco più mosso*,” but he also injects movement into the texture with arpeggiated eighth-note slurs that outline the harmony in the bassoons. Bassoons 1 and 2 begin by trading off two measure phrases from mm. 37-40, and then alternate one measure phrases mm. 41-44. From mm. 45-50, the bassoons outline the harmony sharing the same measure with an ascending eighth-note slur in the second bassoon part followed by a descending eighth-note slur in the first bassoon. (In the string orchestra version, the bassoon parts are condensed in the viola line). This gesture hints at the same accompaniment pattern played by the celli in “*Je crois entendre encore*,” Golijov’s choice of bassoon supports the melody in a similar way, while allowing the cello to double the melody. (Ex. 6 and 7)



Ex. 7- “Je crois entendre encore” (piano reduction, left hand displaying cello accompaniment gesture)

The lullaby melody itself clings to its strophic roots with minor alterations. To describe the motion of taking flight, the melody ascends to Eflat5 in m.42 on the word “gefloygn,” concluding with a descending g minor chord in root position; this contrasts mm.7 and 27, in which the melody outlines a g minor chord in second inversion. The voice eventually sings eighth notes instead of triplets in m. 49, using the stronger rhythm and higher range to enforce the final message of the lullaby: “your home is here, you know.” Goljov also chooses to end this verse with a nod to the modal Hicaz scale in mm. 50-51. The C# and subsequent B flat occur for the first time in this melody, finally landing on A5 with the dominant clearly defined in the orchestra. This half cadence and broadening in the orchestra give the impetus to continue, despite the conclusion of the text.

Returning to g minor, the solo violin begins a new melody while the voice outlines the harmony with characteristic lullaby syllables “ay lu-lu.” While the tonality

and some accompaniment gestures have previously alluded to “Je crois entendre encore,”
mm. 53-66 contain the aria melody note-for-note in the flute and clarinet. (Ex. 8)

6 **51 broadening** $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$ **Tempo I** *mezza voce, intimate, humming*

Sop. *doh.* *(ay lu - lu)* *sim.*

Solo Vln. I *p* *in the foreground, dolce*

Vln. I *p*

Solo Vln. II *pp*

Vln. II *p*

Va *p* *sim*

Solo Vc. *pp*

Vc. *p pizz.*

Cb. *p*

56

Sop.

Solo Vln. I

Vln. I

Solo Vln. II

Vln. II

Va

Solo Vc.

Vc.

Cb.

Ex. 8- Melody of “Je crois entendre encore” depicted in flute and clarinet parts; here in string orchestra reduction violin and viola parts- mm. 51-60.

Oddly enough, though, the Bizet melody seems disguised as it acts as accompaniment to the violin solo and vocal interludes. After the voice concludes at m. 60 (with indication to be seated), the orchestra picks up the same harmonic progression as before and continues to cadence to the dominant at m. 67. The lullaby (and, therefore, vocal portion) of “Night of the Flying Horses” concludes here and yet over half of the piece remains.

The doina begins in m. 67 with a sustained D supporting an improvisatory-style bass clarinet solo. Golijov writes a doina that emulates many of the specific identifying characteristics of the genre: improvisatory solos over chords in free rhythm with an emphasis on rubato. Golijov creates a “dark and dense” atmosphere by keeping the doina melodies in the low strings, using the rich and vibrant tone of the violas and eventually violin (in low register) to depict the emotional weight of the genre. The bass clarinet, clarinet, and flute pick up interjecting secondary solos of ascending modal scales, adding to the improvisatory style of the piece and also reinforcing the modal harmony. Golijov repeats one of the descending scalar melodies from mm. 78-79 and 81-83 in the final song of this set “How Slow the Wind” (mm. 133-136, 137-140). (Ex. 9 and 10)

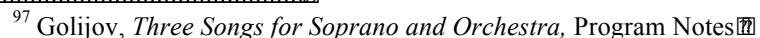


Ex. 9 – descending scalar melody in viola in “Night of the Flying Horses” mm. 79-82

Ex. 10 – descending scalar melody in soprano voice in “How Slow the Wind” mm. 132-137.

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The doina turns abruptly into the gallop, which Golijov describes as “a canonical chase between two orchestral groups.”⁹⁷ As the low strings “wildly” articulate eighth-note and sixteenth-note ostinato patterns, the upper woodwinds and first violins begin the melody in m. 105, which is then “chased” by the clarinet, bass clarinet, and horn in m. 107. These groups continue in pursuit of one another, occasionally joining together at



climactic moments (mm. 140-144, 146-148.) The melody utilizes many folk-like or gypsy musical gestures, including pitch bending/glissando and accacciatura/grace notes. The relentless pulse of the low strings propels the piece into a state of frenzy; Golijov captures the image of a horse chase.⁹⁸ When Suzie sees Cesar and his riding companions, she begins to follow them on her bicycle through the streets of Paris as they lead her on a chase. The gallop heard in the film features rapid motion in the strings underscoring the melody played by a single flute. Golijov writes the melody in canonical chase for the orchestral version presumably because of the lack of a chase visual during performance (as opposed to a film score). The transition from the doina to the gallop occurs quickly; unsurprisingly, the gallop comes to an abrupt end following only one measure of ritardando (m. 165) before halting on a unison G fermata, followed by an accented and yet piano eighth note G. The melodies have joined together finally and the chase ends.

⁹⁸ Golijov alludes to horse imagery in other works as well; *Ainadamar* opens with a “Water and Horse Prelude” that also effectively paints the image of running horses, though he uses a variety of percussion and sounds from a laptop computer as opposed to ostinato strings.

it becomes clearer for the audience to make those intangible connections for Suzie, linking her past as a Jewish girl named Fegele with her present longing for home and a sense of belonging.

Golijov brilliantly uses tonality and ethnic genres to dictate narrative. This works especially well in film, but because of his ease in navigating the concert and folk music vocabularies, “Night of the Flying Horses” retains effectiveness outside the film context as well.

Chapter 3
“Lúa Descolorida”: Reference and Regret

Lúa Descolorida
By Rosalía de Castro

Lúa descolorida
como cor de ouro pálido,
vesme i eu non quixera
me vises de tan alto.
Ó espazo que recorres
lévame, caladiña, nun teu raio.

Moon, colorless
like the color of pale gold:
You see me here and I wouldn't like you
to see me from the heights above.
To the space of your journey,
Take me, silently, in your ray.

Astro das almas orfas,
Lúa descolorida,
eu ben sei que n'alumas
tristeza cal a miña.
Vai contalo ó teu dono,
e dille que me leve adonde habita.

Star of the orphan souls,
Moon, colorless:
I know that you don't illuminate
sadness as sad as mine.
Go and tell it to your master
and tell him to take me to his place.

Mais non lle contes nada,
descolorida lúa,
pois nin neste nin noutros
mundos teréis fortuna.
Se sabe onde a morte
ten a morada escura,
dille que corpo e alma xuntamente
me leve adonde non recorden nunca
nin no mundo en que estou,
nin nas alturas.

But don't tell him anything,
moon, colorless,
because neither in this world, nor in others
will I have good fortune.
If you know where Death
has her dark mansion,
Tell her to take my body and soul together
To a place where I won't be remembered,
Neither in this world,
Nor in the heights above.⁹⁹

“Lúa Descolorida,” the second of the three songs, claims the honor of being the most aria-like and emotionally visceral of the collection. Its opening melisma, lyrical melody, climbing accompaniment, and expressive text come together to create a powerful piece. Golijov describes it himself as “a constellation of clearly defined symbols that affirm contradictory things at the same time, becoming in the end a suspended question

⁹⁹ Osvaldo Golijov, *Three Songs for Soprano and String Orchestra*, [S.I.] (Boosey and Hawkes, 2000/2002); soprano and string orchestra score. Translation by composer.

mark.”¹⁰⁰ Setting a poem by the Galician poet Rosalía de Castro, Golijov achieves the effect of *saudade*, an ineffable combination of longing, melancholy, and nostalgia often attributed to her poetry.¹⁰¹ Golijov explains that Spanish poets “define rather than allude” and that Rosalía de Castro “defines despair in a way that is simultaneously tender and tragic.”¹⁰² The musical setting echoes this juxtaposition of despair and wistful longing, and Golijov creates this through extreme lyricism, tender text setting, and simple, unaffected harmonies.

Golijov colorfully describes “Lúa Descolorida” as

a slow motion ride in a cosmic horse, an homage to Couperin’s melismas in his Lessons of Tenebrae, and velvet bells coming from three different churches. But the strongest inspiration for “Lúa Descolorida” was Dawn Upshaw’s rainbow of a voice, and I wanted to give her music so quietly radiant that it would bring an echo of the single tear that Schubert brings without warning in his voicing of a C major chord.¹⁰³

Originally composed for voice and piano and premiered by Dawn Upshaw and Gilbert Kalish in 1999 as commissioned by the Barlow Endowment for Music Composition at Brigham Young University, this piece enjoys more fame from its orchestral version placement in Golijov’s masterwork *La Pasión según San Marcos*.¹⁰⁴ Premiering in Stuttgart in 2000 as part of the International Bachakademie Stuttgart and Helmuth Rilling to honor the 250th anniversary of Bach’s death, *La Pasión* thrust Golijov into worldwide acclaim. Four composers were commissioned to compose their own version of one of the gospels (others were Wolfgang Rihm, Sofia Gubaidulina, and Tan

¹⁰⁰ Osvaldo Golijov, *Three Songs for Soprano and String Orchestra*, [S.I.] (Boosey and Hawkes, 2000/2002); soprano and string orchestra score. Program notes.

¹⁰¹ Wikipedia, “Rosalía de Castro,” accessed 18 August 2013. Saudade is a Portuguese and Galician term that has no direct English translation. It describes a deep emotional state of longing and often the repressed knowledge that the absent loved one will never return. Saudade can also be called “the love that remains” after a loved one leaves.

¹⁰² Golijov, *Three Songs for Soprano and String Orchestra*, Program Notes.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

Dun), and each brought his or her perspective to the tradition of the Passion narrative.¹⁰⁵ Golijov admitted that he relied on research and collaboration, studying the New Testament for the first time and also the Bach settings that were more familiar to European audiences. His fresh approach resulted in the most explosive setting of the Passion, a mix of flamenco, Jewish Kaddish, Afro-Cuban chant, Brazilian dance, and medieval liturgical drama.¹⁰⁶ Though we hear this as an multicultural array that bears no resemblance to Bach, McClary points out that three centuries have blurred the lines of Italian love songs, secular dances, and baroque church music, and that Bach himself was drawn to collage. Golijov pays homage here to Bach's own eclecticism.¹⁰⁷ However, it is the treatment of the aria form that becomes the most striking similarity between the Passion settings of Bach and Golijov.

The Passions of Bach include chorales, gospel narration in the form of recitative, and arias, which set the poetry of Brockes or Picander. McClary aptly notes that Bach "rarely risks putting newly-invented poetry into Christ's mouth, reserving these interpolations for occasions of particular grief felt by the apostles."¹⁰⁸ These arias are solos given to named characters, such as Peter and Judas. The meditation poetry of these pieces designates them as arias. Bach encourages the Lutheran congregant to meditate on these texts as part of their worship experience, and composes arias to aid in this experience. As the soloist sings the poetry with personal feelings, the listener responds

¹⁰⁵ Susan McClary, "More Pomo than Thou: The Status of Cultural Meanings in Music," *New Formations*, 32.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 33.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

with his or her own.¹⁰⁹ The congregation responds with theological or devotional meditation in the chorales. This corresponds to a common type of prayer in Bach's time that examines a three-fold meditation: memory, understanding, and will. Memory recalls a subject, understanding considers it, and will addresses God in colloquy.¹¹⁰

Aptly fitting with the subject of the Holy Trinity, three-fold meditation became a devotional prayer finally made available to the common people. This type of meditation prayer makes listening to the Passion in performance a devotional and personal experience. Picander's text in the *St. Matthew Passion* expresses the emotions of sadness, devotion, and, most commonly, guilt. For example, the aria "Erbarme dich, mein Gott," expresses Peter's guilt and desolation after the denial of Christ. As the listener experiences this aria, he or she considers the significance of the Passion in terms of Christ's sacrifice and his or her own personal guilt.¹¹¹ Often the case in opera and also true in these instances, arias stand as moments of emotional reflection for the characters, halting the forward momentum of the action. The poetic text and the musical setting aid each other in creating a specific affect that spurs the meditation of the listener.

One could make the argument for "Lúa Descolorida" as *La Pasión*'s "Erbarme dich." Though composed as a stand-alone art song prior to its insertion in *La Pasión*, the emotional vocabulary used and affect achieved through this piece function in a similar way to Bach's beloved alto aria. Golijov's choice to include this piece at this point in his Passion narrative (immediately following Peter's denial of Christ and preceding the sentencing by Pilate) speaks to his understanding of Bach, affect, and human emotion.

¹⁰⁹ Rosalie Athol Schellhous, "Form and Spirituality in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*," *The Musical Quarterly* 71, no. 3 (Anniversaries: 1. Johann Sebastian Bach- b. 1685; Heinrich Schütz-b. 1585, 1985): 298.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 299.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 305, 311.

Peter expresses his guilt in Golijov's work through the words of Rosalía de Castro.

Golijov creates the same affect as Bach, working within the tradition but finding his own solution. Like Bach's vocal writing for the aria movements, this piece displays the most lyricism and resembles European opera.¹¹² Whether intended or not, Golijov nods to "Erbarne dich" with a notable violin solo in "Lúa Descolorida" as well. As if to address the moon as her God, Rosalía de Castro evokes a strong sense of guilt and despair, similar to that of "Erbarne dich." Yet while Picander's poem pleads for mercy and requests that God sees the tears of Peter,¹¹³ Rosalía de Castro's speaker has too much shame, and actually states that she would not like the moon to see her.

Rosalía de Castro was well acquainted with isolation and guilt, and often overtly employed these themes in her poetry.¹¹⁴ First, being of illegitimate birth, she developed an orphan complex in her poetic persona, which distinguishes her as a Romantic who tended to view fate as cruel and characterize herself as a victim.¹¹⁵ Through no fault of her own, she inherits a sense of melancholy and isolation due to her life circumstances; however, the sense of guilt that permeates her poetry comes from a second biographical point, in which she lost her honor at the hands of an anonymous seducer.¹¹⁶ The overt language of her poetry speaks to a knowledge of physical passion and an intense craving for love which later manifests in personal shame and guilt. Her experience creates a paradoxical view of love in her poetry, simultaneously exciting and tormenting. This

¹¹² McClary, "More Pomo than Thou," 33.

¹¹³ "Erbarne dich, mein Gott und meiner Zählen willen! Schau hier, Herz und Auge weint vor dir, bitterlich/ Have mercy, my God, for my tears' sake! Look here, heart and eyes weep for you, bitterly" *St. Matthew Passion*.

¹¹⁴ Robert G. Havard, "Image and Persona in Rosalía de Castro's *En las orillas del Sar*," *Hispanic Review* 42, no. 4 (Autumn, 1974): 395.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 395.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 397.

paradox extends to her use of lunar imagery, often employed in her poems.¹¹⁷ Stirring her passion or chastising her with its purity, the moon carries a value in its ability to shed light and therefore provoke the shadows and darkness of the speaker of the poem. Rosalía de Castro's guilt links her with a nocturnal and dark atmosphere that seeks illumination, as she often writes about the contrast of light and dark.¹¹⁸ "Lúa Descolorida" describes the desperate struggle of the speaker addressing the moon and asking for illumination, despite deep feelings of unworthiness. Guilt and a fatalistic view of the world and her position in it create a hopeless and yet impassioned plea.

Rosalía de Castro's works also contain significant amounts of liquid imagery, not surprisingly on account of her Galician heritage. The Atlantic Ocean and the clouds and rain of Galicia factor into her poems and contrast with the arid landscape of Castile, but more emphatically, her poems describe a thirst that carries erotic implications but can also suggest her desire for religious salvation.¹¹⁹ The two desires war with each other inside her, resulting in a belief that her sensuality has made her unworthy of God's love. This tragic sense of incompatibility that she deems the result of her own weakness manifests in her poems, and "Lúa Descolorida" is no exception.¹²⁰

In "Lúa Descolorida," the speaker addresses the colorless moon. She quickly remarks that, while the moon sees her, she would not like the moon to see her from heights above, but pleads instead to be taken to the space of the moon's journey. The second stanza grows more personal, as she addresses the moon as the "star of orphan souls." Shame and guilt permeate the verse in which the speaker asserts that her sadness

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 399.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 399-400.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 403.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 404.

cannot be illuminated, and still requests to be taken to the place of the master of the moon. The final stanza displays the most desperate and yet fatalistic view of the speaker; she admits her fate will not change, not here or anywhere else. She goes on to request that Death should come and take her to a place where she will not be remembered.

“Lúa Descolorida” opens with a melisma that Golijov models after François Couperin’s *Leçons de ténèbres*. These pieces, scored for one or two soprano voices, begin with melismatic lines set to letters of the Hebrew alphabet (Aleph, Gimel, Jod, Caph). The primary goal of the service of the tenebrae is to encourage meditation, and these melismas were intended to draw in the listener and prepare them for the text to come. Couperin and other composers from the French baroque craft melody with a penchant for shape unhampered by the thematicism of their German and Italian counterparts.¹²¹ Melodies contain a variety of contours for their intrinsic beauty. This approach can be perceived in the opening melismas of Couperin’s *Leçons de ténèbres* and can be seen in the opening melisma of “Lúa Descolorida.” The melodies of the French baroque also display a close union of poetry and music, with fidelity to the text contributing the largest influence to melodic structure.¹²² While this characteristic is not unique to vocal music today (or for the last two centuries, for that matter), Couperin’s setting of the text in the *Leçons de ténèbres* shows a reverence for the natural pattern of the language. (Ex. 12)

¹²¹ David Tunley, “Couperin and French Lyricism,” *The Musical Times* 124, no. 1687, Music of the French Baroque, (September 1983): 544.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 543.

SOPRANO

VA - U

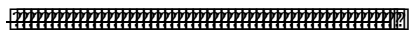
Récitatif 10

Et e-gres - sus est a fi - li - a Si - on o-mnis de - cor e -

Ex. 12- Melisma and opening line of recitative from Couperin's *Seconde Leçons de ténèbres* (mm. 1-12).

Couperin reserves vocal display for the opening melisma, similarly to what Golijov does in “Lúa Descolorida.” The structure of the piece also mimics the structure of the *Leçons de ténèbres*, opening with a florid melisma and then alternating syllabic text setting with melismatic passages. Golijov also nods to Couperin in his indication for the strings to bow “as in ‘early music’ with almost no vibrato, and ‘air’ between each note.”¹²³

Though Golijov himself cites Couperin as his inspiration, one can also hear an improvisatory flamenco-like wail in the opening melisma, made even clearer by the indication “Ay” instead of “Ah” as the syllable. The deep C major chord in the muted strings accompaniment anchors the opening vocal line, which begins on a bright E natural. Golijov deliberately chooses C major, as he believes it symbolizes “the possibility of resurrection, if you want, or transcendence after death. An all-



¹²³ Osvaldo Golijov, *Three Songs for Soprano and String Orchestra*, [S.I.] (Boosey and Hawkes, 2000/2002); soprano and string orchestra score.

encompassing faith, so to speak.”¹²⁴ He utilizes C major to reinforce ideas of transformation, as he does in Margarita Xirgu’s transformation from life to death in “Doy mi sangre” in *Ainadamar*. Like Schubert, whom he references in the program notes for the piece, key selection plays an important role in developing the landscape and color of a piece.

Following a sustained crescendo, the melisma begins with trill-like motion that lands briefly on the tonic before a gentle sob of an ascending major third back to the E natural. A soft VI 4-2 (III- 6) chord follows with no bass, creating an unstable and shimmering texture as the vocal line mainly sings a D natural. (Ex.13)

Slowly rocking
Infinitely tender: Couperin “Lullaby” (as in the letters of “Leçons de Tenebres”)

Soprano

Piano

p a breeze

pp

p

bloom mp

8va 7

(h) 8

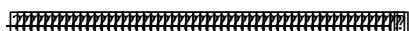
(h) 8

Ex. 13 Opening melisma of “Lúa Descolorida”

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[REDACTED]

The third measure moves to the dominant with a G in the bass as the vocal line increases in intensity with a crescendo to F, followed by a florid passage back to B



¹²⁴ McKinnon, “*Ainadamar*’s Architect,” 38.

natural in the fourth measure and then another sob gesture leaning back into the tonic C. Because of the prominence of melody in this opening gesture, the accompanimental chords act as a shimmery backdrop for this emotional outburst.

The vocal line resumes with text set in a naturally set rhythmic pattern which mimics the natural rhythm of the poetry, not unlike Couperin and his French baroque contemporaries. The upper strings support the vocal line with ascending quarter notes (the “ladder of Jacob’s dream”) while the lower strings outline the chords in off beat pizzicato. This creates the effect of the speaker gazing skyward to the moon despite the vocal line remaining in a low tessitura for the opening address to the moon. Golijov writes the opening statement in a low tessitura and also indicates *mezza voce* to define the ideas of guilt, shame, and unworthiness that permeate Rosalía de Castro’s poetry. Rhythmically he reinforces this by weakening the line with syncopation and entrances that never occur on the strong beats, displaying a sense of sobbing and trepidation in making requests and addressing the moon. In contrast, the melisma and lines emboldened with melisma always begin on the first beat of the measure, usually supported by a strong C major chord. (Ex. 14 and 15)

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me, ca - la - di - ña, nun teu ra - io.

15

18

8va-1

Ex. 15- Melisma beginning on strong beat, mm. 15-20.

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The contrast between these two ideas mirrors the message of the poem, that of the personal conflict of aspiration and defeated resignation. The speaker desires to be transported, but does not believe herself worthy. This ties in directly with Rosalía de Castro's own struggle of wrestling with sensual passion that made her feel unworthy of God's love. Golijov captures this struggle with contrast of the syllabically set text and passionate melisma.

As the poem grows more personal ("vesme i eu non quixera me vises de tan alto"), the vocal line ascends an octave to E5 (the same as the opening melisma). To display the embarrassment of the speaker, the line immediately descends in a scalar

pattern, retreating to the lower range in mm. 9-11. Golijov indicates “liquid, sweet” at m. 15 when the speaker finally makes a request of the moon (“lévame, caladiña, nun teu raio.”) The strings begin to play sustained chords for the first time since the opening melisma, aiding in achieving a more liquid effect. Golijov captures the passion of the speaker by bringing back the florid melisma at the close of “raio,” as if desire can no longer be contained.

The second stanza continues in the same manner as the first, nearly strophic in form. Golijov references Bach’s use of the solo violin in “Erbarne dich” with his obbligato at m. 33. Structurally, Golijov also nods to Richard Strauss’s “Beim Schlafengehen” from *Vier Letzte Lieder* with this mid point violin solo. The solo takes over the melisma of the voice, patterned with the same turns and trills. It also resumes the descending scalar pattern from mm. 9-10 and 25-26.

At m. 40, Golijov writes the first entrance for the voice with text on the first beat of the measure, imbuing the line with passion and strength. This also begins on the same E5 as the opening melisma, but instead of lingering around this tessitura or descending, the line ascends to a pianissimo climax on A6. The unstable major III chord in first inversion and high range in the strings gives the feeling of being on a precipice, as does the fermata in the vocal line. The arrival at “nada” (nothing) in m.41 marks the return to C major, a satisfying homecoming, as the voice sings E natural (with a little embellishment for emotional decoration) and the strings take up bell-like C major chords. Golijov captures the desperation of the text (“Mais non lle contes nada, descolorida lúa, pois nin neste nin noutros mundos teréis fortuna”/ But don’t tell him anything, moon, colorless, because neither in this world, nor in others will I have good fortune) with this

vocal line in mm. 41-44. He combines the passion of the melisma with syllabic text setting for this line of text, marking the emotional climax of the poem with the most heightened and operatic vocal writing. This combination illustrates the inner struggle within the speaker to reconcile her sensual desire with her aspiration for salvation.

Following the desperate plea, the vocal line retreats to the low E natural and remains in the lowest part of the range from mm. 45-56. Golijov indicates “resigned, becoming darker,” reinforcing the darkness of the text (the speaker resigns herself to death) with the lowest tessitura. The strings accompany this quasi-parlando line with sighing two-note slur gestures, reminiscent of quiet sobs that correspond with the interruptions in the melody. Rests that interrupt the continuity of the vocal line resemble heaving breaths that the speaker takes to recover from the emotional outburst of mm. 40-44. The line expands rhythmically, emphasizing the text “recorden nunca,” as the motion slows in the strings in mm. 55-56. The poem could end here, but Rosalía de Castro adds a qualifying coda statement to describe the level of isolation and unworthiness experienced by the speaker. Golijov, in turn, brings back the bright E natural over a C major chord. Though similar in contour to the melody in m.40, the change in harmony alters the perception of the melody, taking away some of the desperation and replacing it with calm, though sad, resignation and acceptance. The indication “quietly radiant” hints that the speaker may have found some consolation and peace in the presence of the moon, though it also may be a descriptor for the qualities most adored in Dawn Upshaw’s voice, as expressed in the program notes.¹²⁵ The line ascends to A natural and returns to E, symbolizing the grandeur of the world and also the limitations of being grounded on earth. The final line overtly expresses the heights of heaven or the universe through the

¹²⁵ Ibid.

highest notes in the entire piece. Over the backdrop of shimmering chords, the soprano line soars to a high C (ossia B flat, the option taken by Upshaw in the Atlanta Symphony recording), but then returns to the E, which has come to be identified as home. This reflects the poetry in that the speaker may have aspirations but she believes herself unworthy to achieve them; she allows herself to address the moon, but cannot believe that she can be helped. Ascending to a high C describes the longing for salvation but the descent to the E natural captures the sweet melancholy of resignation. Through his delicate scoring, sensitive text setting, and expressive vocal writing, Golijov successfully weaves the concept of *saudade* into this setting of “Lúa Descolorida.”

In her article on post-modernism, Susan McClary remarks that while Golijov admits this piece is an homage to Couperin’s *Leçons de ténèbres*, the song also echoes *Norma*’s “Casta Diva” or Desdemona’s “Ave Maria” in *Otello*.¹²⁶ Both of these arias, though written fifty years apart and at least a hundred years before “Lúa Descolorida,” share the theme of quiet reverence displayed through extreme lyricism. “Casta Diva,” one of Bellini’s most-beloved and virtuosic arias, displays his gift for long melody. As Norma leads her people in prayer through this night serenade and ode to their goddess, Bellini’s melody floats over a simple accompaniment. This allows the intricacies of melisma and embellishments in the vocal line to stand out above the orchestra and chorus. While the poetic theme and contextual setting are similar to that of “Lúa Descolorida,” the melodic contour and use of melisma are the most striking commonalities. Norma’s impassioned prayer soars with melisma, as if she channels the spirit of the goddess herself. The use of melisma to display passion is certainly nothing

¹²⁶ McClary, “More Pomo than Thou,” 34.

new, especially in the genre of opera and vocal music in general, however these commonalities are interesting to note.

Desdemona's prayer to Maria contrasts "Casta Diva," employing a quiet reverence in lieu of a virtuosic display. Verdi gives Desdemona this aria at her most desperate moment; she has just learned she will most likely die at the hands of her beloved, and resigns herself to this fate in prayer. The opening parlando line on a repeated low e flat allows the urgency of the text to come through the texture; the low tessitura helps with the clarity of the text and also paints Desdemona as a humble and pious woman. Golijov achieves a similar effect in mm. 45-56 of "Lúa Descolorida," using repetition to allow for textual clarity but also a quiet resignation to fate, similar to that of Desdemona. These pieces share themes of death and urgency of prayer juxtaposed with acceptance of fate; both composers use similar solutions to illustrate these themes. (Ex. 16 and 17)

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sotto voce

A - ve Ma - ria, pie - na di gra - zia, e - let - ta Fra le
Hail, Ma - ry, hail! in grace o'er - flow - ing, The Lord Him - self is

col canto

spo - see le ver - gi - ni sei tu, Sia be - ne - det - to il fru - to, o be - ne -
with thee, The Lord Him - self is with thee. Thou blest a - bove all wo - men, blest be thy,

det - ta, Di tue ma - ter - ne vi - sce - re: Ge - su!
Off - spring, the Fruit of thy ma - ter - nal love: Je - su!

Ex. 17- Opening passage of “Ave Maria” in *Otello* Act IV

The similarities between these arias and “Lúa Descolorida” are easily drawn due to thematic commonalities, namely nocturnal scenes, desperate characters, and prayers to higher powers. The musical similarities between Golijov’s writing and the operatic powerhouses of Bellini and Verdi reveal not only Golijov’s clear understanding of traditions of vocalism and expression through song, but also his talent in composing for

classical voice. Rarely does a twenty-first century composer of such prolific output garner comparisons to Verdi and Bellini,¹²⁷ especially when so many opera aficionados believe that contemporary music ignores vocalism and lyricism in favor of innovation and novelty. Golijov manages to innovate while still showing reverence to vocal traditions, which gives emotional weight to the piece and also adds to its beauty.

McClary describes *La Pasión* as “elaborately referential and ostentatiously eclectic.”¹²⁸ “Lúa Descolorida” itself pays homage not only to Couperin, but also functions similarly to a Bach aria, behaves lyrically like an aria by Verdi or Bellini or a Strauss art song, and yet the combination of these elements remains distinctly and uniquely attributed to Golijov. Referencing an array of pieces from the concert music vocal repertoire, “Lúa Descolorida” displays a reverence for vocal writing and Romantic expression within a modern twenty-first century framework.

¹²⁷ McClary makes the comparison to “Casta Diva” and Desdemona in her essay.

¹²⁸ McClary, “More Pomo than Thou,” 34.

Chapter 4

“When They Come Back”¹²⁹: Formal Implications of Recurrent Themes in “How Slow the Wind”

How Slow the Wind
By Emily Dickinson

How Slow the wind
How Slow the sea
How late their feathers be.

Is it too late to touch you, dear?
We this moment knew:
Love marine and love terrene,
Love celestial too.¹³⁰

Nostalgia and memory thoroughly permeate the final song of the trio. Originally composed for string quartet and soprano, “How Slow the Wind” was commissioned by Cecilia Wasserman in memory of her late husband, one of Golijov’s dearest friends, following his accidental death. Golijov writes “I had in mind one of those seconds in life that is frozen in the memory, forever- a sudden death, a single instant in which life turns upside down, different from the experience of death after a long agony.”¹³¹ Combining two brief Emily Dickinson poems, Golijov evokes the pain and power of memory through the element of repetition, both in pulsing ostinato and form.

As stated in the first chapter, the word “nostalgia” comes from a combination of *nostos* (return home) and *algia* (longing) and Boym asserts that “nostalgia is a longing for home that no longer exists, containing the sentiment of loss and displacement but also the romance with one’s own fantasy.”¹³² This idea of returning home can be seen in literal

¹²⁹ Emily Dickinson poem, set by Aaron Copland in *Twelve Poems of Emily Dickinson*

¹³⁰ Osvaldo Golijov, *Three Songs for Soprano and String Orchestra*, [S.I.] (Boosey and Hawkes, 2000/2002); soprano and string orchestra score. Opening notes.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, xvi.

representation in “How Slow the Wind,” as Golijov creates a song in rondo form with recurrent themes. These recurring themes function similarly to the cyclical function of human memory.

Other composers have used this idea of form and repetition to evoke nostalgia and memory in their works. To better understand how these elements are musically depicted, it is advantageous to briefly examine another example from this genre. In *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, another work for soprano and orchestra, American composer Samuel Barber depicts a summer evening through the memory of a child. Barber translates the wistful tone of James Agee’s poem into music through a childhood lullaby-like pentatonic melody in 12/8. He scores the opening with woodwinds to evoke a pastoral theme, and oscillates harmonically between A major and f# minor.¹³³

In *Knoxville*, Barber writes a rondo-like structure with recurrent themes. The lullaby 12/8 melody stands as the main idea and comforting place of return following several episodic interruptions.¹³⁴ In his consideration of how nostalgia and cultural memory are depicted in Barber’s piece, Taylor sites Sigmund Freud’s *Fort und Da* study, in which a child throws a wooden reel attached to a piece of string and brings it back as an attempt to control the mother’s absences.¹³⁵ Acting similarly to the child who requires reassurance of parental return, the main theme’s process of take and return offers comfort to the listener, delivering upon the promise that themes and therefore memories can be recalled.¹³⁶

¹³³ Benedict Taylor, “Nostalgia and Cultural Memory in Barber’s *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*,” *The Journal of Musicology* 25, no. 3 (Summer 2008): 213.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 217.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

Citing Søren Kierkegaard, Taylor goes on to remark that the act of repetition is one of the most intensely argued considerations of temporality, suffering, and religious faith. Kierkegaard places repetition in a religious context, stating “Repetition is and remains a transcendence.”¹³⁷ The return of thematic material in music can therefore become more than merely an adherence to form; this act of repetition carries meaning linked to memory and can therefore become vital to the listener experience. Barber could have ended *Knoxville* following the climactic section in which the text declaims “not now, not ever, but will not ever tell me who I am.” The text of Agee’s poem ends here, and closing the piece at this point would be appropriate and dramatic: an ending would drive home the point that childhood is gone, only memory remains, and reality is cold and stark. Yet Barber returns to the rolling lullaby theme with the melody in the oboe once again, comforting the listener with healing reassurance that comes with repetition.¹³⁸

In his construction, Barber acknowledges the real significance of the loss of innocence and uses repetition to cope with this loss. Repetition and return, combined with their capacity to overcome loss, become recurrent religious themes which also fulfill a deep-rooted psychological need (as per Jungian and Freudian analysis).¹³⁹ When faced with our own mortality and the impermanence of human existence, we seek consolation in shared experience and memory. Agee’s poetry in *Knoxville* pinpoints his own specific childhood memories and yet the composer, the singer, and the listener have a shared feeling of nostalgia as they can map their own childhoods onto the experience. The collective memory of childhood innocence becomes heightened in times following

¹³⁷ Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling, Repetition*, trans. and ed. By Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 186.

¹³⁸ Taylor, “Nostalgia and Cultural Memory,” 217.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 220.

traumatic events; in this instance, the threat of nuclear holocaust following the Second World War and the quickly growing industrialization of a modern age in America create a longing for simpler times.¹⁴⁰

In a symposium on memory and culture, Natalie Zemon Davis and Randolph Starn remarked that “memory is of course a substitute, surrogate, or consolation for something that is missing.”¹⁴¹ A collective memory and understanding from the listener, performer, and composer lend themselves to a shared experience of nostalgia in this piece. But how do the ideas of memory and loss affect a piece when those ideas are personal and also traumatic?

In “How Slow the Wind,” Golijov addresses the subject of deeply personal loss with recurrent themes that attempt to offer consolation and healing. As discussed with Barber’s *Knoxville*, recurrent themes in music can be seen as a way of coping with loss, as an attempt to bring something or someone back. He chooses two Emily Dickinson poems as text for this piece --“How slow the wind” and “Is it too late to touch you, Dear?”-- both of which address concepts of temporality, love, and loss. Golijov uses repetition in the other songs, but this is the most overt example of defined themes that are brought back with only minor alterations. The structure of the piece reads as follows:

A	B	A'	B'	C	D	A'	B'	C'	D'
1-14	15-25	26-38	39-49	50-62	63-78	79-92	93-107	108-121	122-140

This structure paints a broad view of the ways Golijov states and restates thematic ideas in “How Slow the Wind.” Repetitive elements also occur within the themes and

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 221-222.

¹⁴¹ Natalie Zemon Davis and Randolph Starn, introduction to *Representations* 26 (1989): 3.

accompanimental figures themselves, as well as the usage of text and the themes of the text itself. An exploration of the text and its poet yields an improved understanding of how Golijov's settings aptly and subtly reinforce the meaning, and also how the text works together in conjunction with Golijov's music to describe the human experience of grief and loss.

Few American poets enjoy the distinction of Emily Dickinson. Golijov's choice of not one but two Dickinson poems speaks to his cosmopolitan compositional approach and also to the eclectic nature of this collection of songs. They emphasize different aspects of his overall compositional output - the first being a Yiddish lullaby from a film, the second a Galician-dialect Spanish aria from a well-known work, and this, a stand-alone chamber piece with an American text. The choice of Dickinson, an American poet, reflects the American influences on Golijov. Dickinson's poetry is already imbued with musical qualities and has been set musically by many composers, mostly of American nationality.¹⁴² When addressing the concept of death, Dickinson's words are a natural choice. At least one-sixth of her approximately fifteen hundred poems deal with the subject directly, and many more address death in an indirect manner.¹⁴³ Her fascination with the subject began early in her life, when she noticed as a child how "people went away and never came back."¹⁴⁴ As an adult, she writes calmly addressing the death of her own mother, stating: "She slipped from our fingers like a flake gathered by the wind, and is now part of the drift called 'the infinite.'" ¹⁴⁵ Here, her description of wind as

¹⁴² Carolyn Cooley, *The Music of Emily Dickinson's Poetry and Letters: A Study of Imagery and Form*, (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2003), 6.

¹⁴³ Ruth Flanders McNaughton, "Emily Dickinson on Death," *Prairie Schooner* 23, no. 2 (Summer 1949): 203.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 208.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 203.

working in conjunction with death gives an indication for what significance the wind can bear in the poem “How Slow the Wind.”

In only seven short lines, Dickinson expresses the pain of loss, both the loss of another and the loss of time. She offers no consolation in her words, most likely because she remained unsure about the assurance of life after death, despite her longing to believe.¹⁴⁶ For Dickinson, death should only be feared for its power to take from us those whom we love. For this reason, Dickinson’s poems about death and love express her greatest hope for immortality, often likening death to dawn rather than sunset, and asserting that “Love makes us ‘heavenly’ without our trying in the least.”¹⁴⁷

Dickinson addresses the concept of “heavenly Love” in “Is it too late to touch you, Dear?” as she contrasts the love of this world with a love of what is believed to be the next world (“love marine and love terrene, love celestial, too.”) Dickinson follows the direct and painful question “Is it too late to touch you, Dear?” with an emphatic and resigned “we this moment knew.” Yet there may be a glimmer of hope when she addresses their various forms of love, conjecturing that beyond the “Love marine and love terrene” there will be “love celestial, too.”

The concept of time and its relation to death also fascinated Dickinson. She writes “Life is death we’re lengthy at, Death the hinge to life;” implying that all of life is a slow death, and perhaps the moment of death serves as a daybreak into learning the true significance of life.¹⁴⁸ When discussing the wind and the sea, Dickinson employs the adjective “slow.” The awareness of Dickinson’s views on death and temporality assists us in a greater understanding of these seemingly simple and observant lines of poetry.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 208.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 213.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 214.

The most perplexing line of both poems “How late their feathers be” could be addressing the tardiness of some avian species, or could be a metaphor for the frustration of the order of events and the passing of time. The presence of feathers (and absence of birds) also denotes a remnant; the birds themselves have gone and only feathers exist as a reminder of their passing. The word “late” carries the implication of regret, one of the most painful accompaniments to loss and nostalgia.

Given her ability to address the concepts of loss and death, the poetry of Emily Dickinson lends itself well to this commission and therefore fits into this collection of songs as a whole. These specific poems dance around the idea of death, avoiding the direct address Dickinson so often employed, allowing the reader to have a more open interpretation. This quality, combined with the paradoxical vagaries and yet specificity in the words themselves, makes these poems appropriate for song setting. On a more practical note, perhaps these poems were chosen for their brevity and their potential for repetition, coinciding with the theme of repetition and nostalgia previously addressed.

Golijov sets the poem “How Slow the Wind” first, choosing to include only the first two lines in the A` section of the piece. He only writes the final line in the final section (D`) of the piece (“How late their feathers be!”) and sets it to a vocal line that contrasts with every other line in the piece. While the other vocal lines are legato and intervallic, this setting most resembles the wail of a flamenco singer. It is as if the singer can no longer maintain composure after recounting the metered “how slow the wind, how slow the sea” and the elation of “love marine and love terrene, love celestial, too.” The expression of the word “late” here also gives an indication that with this loss accompanies frustration and potential regret.

The second poem Golijov sets at section C, using the words “Is it too late to touch you, Dear?” Again, Dickinson’s use of the word “late” coupled with directly addressing the subject of the poem creates a personal response. He does not set “We this moment knew” until the end of the melisma in B’ and in doing so, draws attention to the text itself and also bridges it with the lines that follow (“Love marine and love terrene”).

Pairing these poems together may not initially seem like the most natural decision, but Dickinson’s words complement one another. The images of wind and sea are complemented by “love marine” and “love terrene,” culminating in the idea of celestial love. The concept of time and its limited quantity are addressed in both the last line of one poem and the first line of the other. The combination of these poems also helps to enhance their meanings; while “How slow the wind” seems merely to depict an impersonal nautical scene, “Is it too late to touch you, Dear?” contains such deeply intimate language that their juxtaposition imparts a more personal meaning on one another.

Golijov’s choice to alternate the lines of poetry in his setting for this song reflects his interpretation of the meaning of the text. The qualities of human emotion and memory do not lend themselves to a direct and linear narrative, and Golijov’s setting and use of overlapping text describes this. The calm and nearly vacant observation of “how slow the wind, how slow the sea” seem to spark a memory that can only be recalled in wordless melisma. That memory spurs the direct question “is it too late to touch you, Dear?” from the second poem. Golijov allows a regain of composure with a return to “how slow the wind, how slow the sea,” only to follow with a more passionate and intricate melisma. This melisma leads to a different memory that reflects acceptance on

“we this moment knew” from the second poem. The joyful memories of “love marine and love terrene, love celestial, too” follow directly before an abrupt realization of the beloved’s absence; the last line of text “oh, how late their feathers be!” comes from the first poem, returning the listener to the original state of withdrawn sadness. The alternation reflects the ways in which memories and emotions connect within the human experience of grief. (Table 1).

Measure number	How Slow the Wind	Is it too late to touch you Dear?
mm. 29-34	How slow the wind	
mm. 35-37	How slow the sea	
mm. 50-62		Is it too late to touch you Dear?
mm. 82-88	How slow the wind	
mm. 89-91	How slow the sea	
mm. 104-107		We this moment knew
mm. 108-113		Love marine and love terrene
mm. 114-121		Love celestial too
mm. 122-135	How late their feathers be	

Table 1: Individual lines of text from both “How slow the wind” and “Is it too late to touch you dear”

Golijov sets the lines “How slow the wind” and “How slow the sea” to similar motivic ideas: both follow a descending interval from “how” to “slow” (the first a minor third, the second a major second) and also from “the” to “wind” or “sea” (both a falling minor third from E flat to C). Despite the undulating motion in low strings, the vocal line echoes the sentiment of the poem in its drawn-out suspensions. The voice enters on the second half of the second beat, differing slightly from the melody played by the basset horn (or first violin in the string orchestra version) at the opening of the piece, which

enters on the second half of the third beat. The basset horn solo and the soprano vocal line differ only by that initial entrance and duration; the vocal line mimics the basset horn melody from measures 8-14 in measures 32-37. (Ex. 18-19)

8

Vln. I

G string

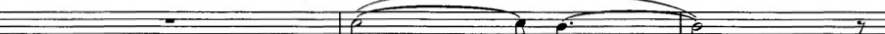
11

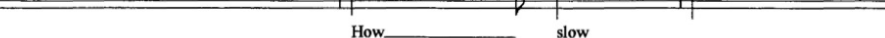
Vln. I

cresc. poco a poco

Ex. 18 Violin I (Basset horn solo) from mm. 8-14 from "How slow the wind"

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31 Sop. 
How _____ slow the

34 Sop. 
wind How slow the

Ex. 19 Soprano entrance from mm. 32-36 from “How slow the wind”

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The descending suspension motive reinforces the contemplative and melancholy mood of poem, with each short phrase mirroring a sigh. By placing entrances on off beats and using unequal lengths of notes, Golijov weakens the pulse in the vocal line and contrasts the pulsing ostinato of the low strings. This juxtaposition symbolizes the

struggle to live in two worlds: the temporal, driving world of the present reality and the languorous, dreamlike world of memory. The vocal line floats suspended in sighs and long sustained notes above the constant drive of the low strings with the occasional interruption of a flamenco-like solo in the English horn.

Following the setting of the first two lines of poetry, Golijov continues with the descending suspension motive but lengthens the phrase and omits text. He indicates “Vocalise: ‘underwater’ ” at m. 39, and also marks “*piu mosso*, fluid,” emphasizing a liquid quality required of the sound. The tremolo in the strings brings full attention to the vocal line, now in the upper *passaggio* and out of the middle voice. The scalar vocalise begins with longer valued notes that grow shorter as the line descends. The first utterance of the phrase (m. 39-42) repeats as a sequence a whole step lower from m. 43-46, hinting at B flat major with a D natural and then suggesting E flat major in 43-46. Golijov then quickens the rhythm for the third sequence and plays with a Phrygian modal melody that will bring us back to f minor by m. 50. These descending vocalises act as emotional release in the context of the song; Golijov uses these melodic lines without text as if to say that the text overwhelms and the speaker (or singer) can only respond with a vocalise to express emotion. Despite soft dynamic indications, Golijov implies this strong emotional content in his melodic setting of these phrases.

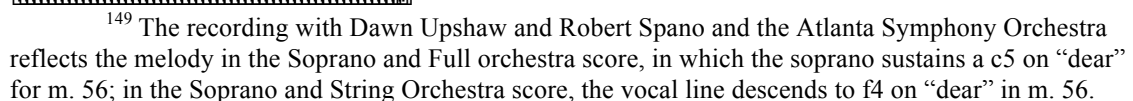
The first line of the second poem appears at m. 50, with an indication by the composer “almost a whisper.” Golijov could be implying the intimacy of asking such a question or, more likely, addressing the idea that the speaker knows the answer to the question-and the answer is unfortunately, yes. Again, the melodic line contains off-beat entrances and sustained valued notes, but these phrases ascend rather than descend,

mirroring the natural speech pattern for asking a question. In m. 56-62, Golijov harmonically repeats and melodically slightly modifies the six-measure phrase from 50-56, repeating only the text “late to touch you, to touch you, touch you dear?” These phrases only spell out an f minor triad, mostly in second inversion, and conclude with the tonic note at the height of the phrase; however, because of an unstable harmony, the F at m. 62 does not act like a tonic or sound resolved.¹⁴⁹ (Ex. 20)

Ex. 20- "How Slow the Wind" mm. 57-62

[?] [??] [???] [??] [??] [??] [??] [??]

Though the vocal line repeats an ascending pattern, the bass follows a descending tetrachord groundbass pattern (F-E flat- D natural, D flat) which occurs nearly four times in completion, while the vocal phrases are six-measures in length. The strings murmur a sixteenth-note ostinato pattern of thirds in the first four measures (50-52), then slow to eighth-note triplets (53-55), followed by eighth-notes (56-58) and finally ending the



pattern with quarter note triplets. This gradual slowing followed by the unstable harmony at the end of this section represent the gradual slipping away of memory and the tragedy of being confronted with reality as the question receives its answer.

An instrumental interlude at m. 63 halts the forward momentum of the piece. With its most striking component the low basset horn solo, the chords of the strings and bells act as accompaniment, though the tolling bells signify the passing of time and also give an ominous overtone. For the first time in the piece, the flamenco motive steps forward as the main melody, and one of Golijov's distinctive compositional trademarks comes to the fore. At measure 70, the bass clarinet assumes the solo. This gesture, complete with trills and mordents, echoes the tango melismas of Astor Piazzolla and the solos of klezmer musicians. The melody itself retains the qualities of an improvised vocal melisma contained within the very basic harmonic palette of f minor and C major (tonic and dominant). Golijov introduced this motive briefly in m. 28 and again in mm. 34 and 37, and while it came through the texture in those instances, it becomes the focal point in this instrumental interlude from 63-78.

In keeping with the theme of nostalgia and memory, Golijov repeats the initial setting of "How slow the wind, how slow the sea" from mm. 79-93. He also repeats the vocalise section with the same accompaniment, though in m. 97 he writes out an expressive ornament that echoes the clarinet solo from the interlude and hints at the melismas to come later in the piece.

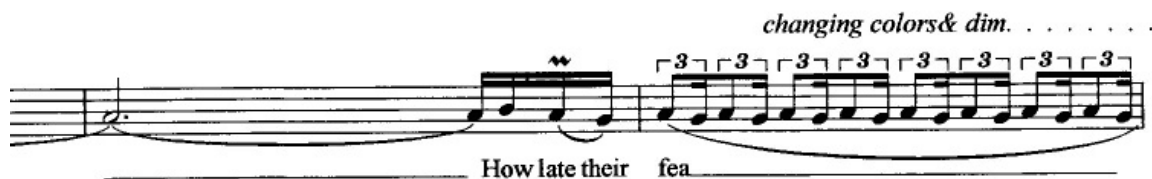
The most poignant and emphatic text setting occurs at m. 104 with "We this moment knew." Golijov marks "rinforzando" at the cadence to F major, highlighting the importance of the text. Golijov employs this harmonic gesture at crucial cadential points

in some of his other works, notably at the conclusion of “Doy mi sangre” in his opera *Ainadamar*. The harmonic implication reinforces the significance of the textual sentiment and also spurs the piece to continue. “Love marine and love terrene” follow “we this moment knew” and while these two lines are connected textually, a new section begins musically with this new text.

Similarly to “Is it too late to touch you, Dear?” (mm. 50-62) Golijov writes an ascending melodic motive with sixteenth note murmuring in the strings and a descending tetrachord at m. 108, this time implying the subdominant b flat minor instead of f minor. The rhythmic motives in the strings also expand similarly to the way they act in 50-62. Melodically, this section displays the exuberance of love, beginning low in the singer’s range to describe the “love marine and love terrene.” To describe the ascent to heaven, Golijov outlines a b flat minor chord to F5 (one of the higher notes in the piece) on “celestial” at m. 115. He reinforces the idea with another outlined arpeggio to a high sustained B flat 5 on the word “love” at m. 118. This gesture coincides with Dickinson’s beliefs of love and its ability to inspire hope for an afterlife. An open fifth of F and C supports the vocal line as it fades in diminuendo at m. 121-122; because of the ambiguous tonality, the cadence seems to float suspended on a precipice, uncertain as to how it will resolve.

Abruptly, as if to awaken from a dream, the voice and English horn answer the question of tonality by their entrances on A flat (return to f minor) at m. 123. The pulsing ostinato pattern resumes in the low strings, harp, and percussion, and now the voice finally articulates the flamenco melody initially introduced and played by the double reeds. Golijov indicates “dolcissimo, dense and dark” for the voice; the emotional

gravitas associated with the text as well as the dramatic flair of the embellished melody line combine for an emphatic concluding statement. Not unlike Barber's *Knoxville*, a main theme recurs in this concluding section (also played by a double reed), despite the fact that this theme differs from a gentle lullaby-like melody. Golijov masterfully introduces this theme earlier in the piece with the double reeds in two measure phrases, then he expands upon it in an interlude. Yet by finally giving this flamenco melody to the voice, Golijov imbues this section with a visceral, almost wail-like quality. Despite the repetition and recurrent themes, the final statement of the piece is not one of comfort, but one of anguish and regret. The turbulent ostinato of the low strings coupled with the half-step oscillation in the voice on "feathers" in mm. 125-127 mimic the emotional release of a person in the throes of grief and mourning. (Ex. 21)



Ex. 21 "How Slow the Wind" mm. 124-125

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???

The vocal line resembles a sob, often an interrupted, choked sob (in m. 128, the line abruptly terminates at "how late their" and resumes again, repeating "how late their feathers be" halfway through m. 129). The choice of Phrygian modal tonality reinforces

concludes with an understated low note. The majority of the orchestra continues for two measures with the ostinato pattern in the dominant key before abruptly halting at a fermata. The choice to end the piece with this dominant chord in this manner endorses the idea that there may not be a definitive answer to Dickinson's questions or any other life and death questions. Concluding with the dominant gives the impression of a work unfinished, ideas unresolved, and oddly, a glimmer of hope in C major. As addressed before with "Lúa Descolorida," Golijov views C major with an association of transcendence and resurrection. While upon a first listening this conclusion seems rushed and anticlimactic, exploration of the text and piece as a whole reveal a brilliant interpretation of not only how Dickinson views death, love, and eternity, but also gives insight into the ways we as humans grieve and cope with loss and yet continue in the face of tragedy.

CONCLUSION

As Golijov strives to preside over the “new era” of art music in which boundaries start to blur, an exploration of how he transverses the borders of popular and art music genres yields a more thorough understanding of his style and also his success. It is his intentional interest in polystylism as his own personal preference and taste, and not necessarily his multicultural background, that informs his compositional choices.¹⁵⁰ Unlike composers who sprinkle multicultural elements into their works in translation with hopes for an effect, Golijov seamlessly weaves these elements into an art music context and it is their combination that contributes to the emotional weight and meaning of the piece.

Because Golijov “modulates cultures like other composers modulate keys,”¹⁵¹ these multicultural elements easily draw the most focus in analysis and discussion of his works. Yet the emotional efficacy of the *Three Songs for Soprano and Orchestra* comes from the combination of cultural references within a more formal art music technique. His music becomes a clear conduit for emotion by drawing equally from a popular and art music vocabulary. Using these vocabularies, Golijov then achieves maximum emotional expression in these art songs through a combination of reference and innovation.

“Night of the Flying Horses,” “Lúa Descolorida,” and “How Slow the Wind” each depict nostalgia in various forms. Despite texts by different poets in different languages, these songs share a quality that can be uniquely attributed to Golijov’s style: an emotional

¹⁵⁰ Gidal, “ ‘Latin American’ Composers of Art Music and the United States,” 55.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

message that depends upon listener associations between cultural and art music forms. Golijov's strength as a composer lies in his heightened awareness of the references he chooses to use—whether they be a Couperin melisma, a Bizet aria, or a doina—and how he utilizes them within the work. Because he has equal footing in both the art music and popular traditions, a listener can also draw parallels to other references in his pieces, specifically his gift for lyricism that can just as easily echo the arias of Verdi and Bellini as it can represent a Yiddish lullaby that functions in counterpoint with a Bizet aria.

To achieve moments of unbridled emotion, Golijov turns to modal harmony and rhythmic gestures that reference cultural genres, such as klezmer and flamenco. Each of the *Three Songs for Soprano and Orchestra* makes use of these elements in different ways. “Night of the Flying Horses” juxtaposes a simple and metered lullaby with an improvisatory-style doina, which not only provides emotional contrast for the piece in a concert style performance, but also displays a shift in narrative for the context of film composition. The lullaby and the doina serve different purposes in the meaning of the film, as one depicts Suzie's relationship with her father and her journey, while the other underscores the sexual tension and vacillation she feels with César. In “Lúa Descolorida,” Golijov matches the *saudade* quality of Rosalía de Castro's poem by beginning with an “ay” melisma, bearing as much resemblance to an improvisatory flamenco vocal gesture as a Couperin melisma. Golijov reserves the combination of melisma and syllabic text setting for the most climactic passage of text, a gesture which further reinforces the emotional expression. Lastly, in “How Slow the Wind,” Golijov sets the final line of text in a Phrygian modal tonality with an improvisatory rhythmic gesture reminiscent of flamenco. This choice reflects the raw, emotional quality of the

text; the wail-like quality of the melisma is a depiction of grief following a tragic loss.

Golijov's music can be better understood when these specific moments are examined in their context.

Likewise, however, it is crucial to not discount Golijov's ability to transverse the art music landscape and draw upon reference and structure to also convey emotion. By crafting the lullaby of "Night of the Flying Horses" to work in counterpoint with "Je crois entendre encore," he plays on the concept of nostalgia and memory, both in and out of the context of the film. "Lúa Descolorida" focuses on the qualities of lyricism and references the aria as an expressive form in some of its most well-known incantations, including "Erbarne dich," "Casta Diva," and Desdemona's "Ave Maria." Golijov alternates between syllabic text setting and melisma to contrast the sentiments of shameful despair and longing. In "How Slow the Wind," much like Barber in his *Knoxville: Summer of 1915*, Golijov uses a rondo form and recurrent themes as an attempt to offer consolation and healing, as if to attempt to bring someone back or at the very least recall a memory. The use of references from the art music genre adds a layer of depth and understanding upon his innovative and often multi-culturally informed works.

When considering the genre of art song, a genre which Golijov himself refers to as his home,¹⁵² it is crucial to examine the text chosen by the composer. These three texts address the concepts of memory and nostalgia, and they do so through direct means. The lullaby text of "Night of the Flying Horses," though written for the film, reflects the texts of many Yiddish lullabies. Rosalía de Castro's poem is a reverential prayer and impassioned plea all in one, as the speaker wrestles with the shame of desire and her aspiration for salvation. Emily Dickinson's poems are short but loaded with nostalgic

¹⁵² Llorente, "Mi casa son el cuarteto y la voz," 63.

and painful meaning. The joy of love and pain of remembrance combine in only seven lines of text. All of these texts describe similar emotions with different approaches, and therefore Golijov's settings of these texts differ accordingly.

As McClary states, Golijov's "elaborately referential and ostentatiously eclectic"¹⁵³ style utilizes an emotional directness that works especially well in pieces for voice. Because of his ability to innovate within a context of lyricism and beauty, his pieces become journeys of vocal expression for the singer. An understanding of his varied and eclectic vocabulary yields an even greater appreciation for performing his works and sharing them with an audience yearning to be moved by these distinctive, unique, and expressive songs that defy labels and just may be introducing a new era of music.

¹⁵³ McClary, "More Pomo than Thou," 34.

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